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The Long Island FISHERMAN

The Difference Between Just Fishing and Catching Fish!

JUNE 17th, 1976, ISSUE No. 22

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The Long Island FISHERMAN

The Difference Between Just Fishing and Catching Fish!

VOLUME 11, No. 22 JUNE 17th, 1976

FEATURES-

Sinker Bouncing: SEABASS ..... Matt Ahern 6

The BOTTOM Line: FLUKE FISHING ..... Scott Simons 8

Bass Fishing: SOFT SHELL CRABS ..... Capt. J. DeMaio 10

CONSERVATION COMMENTS ..... Al Ristori 12

FLUKE & FLOUNDER ..... Fred Guardineer 13

ASK THE CAPTAIN ..... Capt. R. Lepper 14

Diving For Bass: THE MONTAUK SYSTEM ..... Capt. R. D'Albora 16

BASS, MISTER ..... Ron Miller 18

BIG BOAT FLUKING ..... Bruce Sucher 20

BASS & BUNKER ..... Capt. R. Onorato 22

DEPARTMENTS-

Editorial 4
Fishing Reports 24
Fishing Trip contest 29
Classified Ads 52
Tide & Solunar Tables 55
Free Lure Offer 56

About the Cover—

Ever wonder what a striped bass or porgy looks like underwater? This photo was taken by Ed Haring, but the location is a secret. To find out more about fish underwater, read "Diving for Bas—The Montauk System" by Capt. Ron D'Albora on page 16 in this issue.

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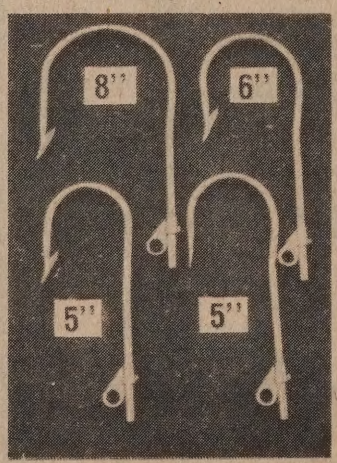

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EDITORIAL

Taking a stand on either side of the argument about gillnetting in Great South Bay is difficult for us. This is so because we are torn between what we know to be scientifically true and the undeniable fact that widespread gillnetting on the Heckscher flats in Great South Bay is a serious situation because it has involved human beings in conflict.

According to some reports, sportsfishermen have driven their outboards through set nets, torn nets apart with anchors, and there has been talk of guns and retaliation. For those of us that have not been directly involved in the battle the thought of threats and gunfire seems childish and it is. But it is important to understand why such confrontations occur. We are a society of laws and when we feel that we have been mistreated or abused unjustly, we turn to the law to provide satisfaction. And so it should be, for we are aggressive creatures who have learned to be satisfied by the tempered wheels of justice instead of shotgun vengeance.

Men turn back to primitive ways of handling their problems when society does not provide a system of orderly response and justice. When men feel that the law has let them down they feel a need to satisfy their ''macho'' stirrings ''for the good of all men''. Of course this too is utter nonsense.

We have seen these battles before. The pros may change but the scenario remains unchanged: The bunker wars in Long Island Sound several years ago, the endless war in the surf between often insensitive haul seiners and ignorant surf fisherman, and the Russo-American battles on the continental shelf.

Make no mistake, we are dealing with serious comtemporary problems here. Whenever people interact in such a way that they destroy each others property or bring physical harm to one another, something must be done. The burden of guilt lies with those whose job it is and was to formulate and enforce laws.

The tragedy becomes even more profound when one legislative arm is crippled by another. You see, two years ago, the Town of Islip passed an ordinance which prohibited gillnetting in the bay. The reason for the action was to prevent overharvesting of spawning weakfish. It was determined, however, that such regulations must originate from State jurisdiction and not local towns. But, and it is a big BUT, the State has not filled the vacuum left by the removal of the Town Ordinance. Result: confusion, conflict, destruction of property, and possibly murder.

But the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation biologists have said that the gillnetting does not seriously affect future year classes of weakfish, and we agree, however unpalatable the prospect may be to sportsmen. Other factors, such as the abundance of eelgrass, grass shrimp, sandeels, squid, and acceptable water temperatures would seem to be among the more important controlling factors.

Still we believe that the DEC has let us down. The protection of the fish should not be the only reason for the establishment of controlling rules and regulations. Laws control people and are established because of the people and therefore should help people. If this is beyond the jurisdiction of the DEC then the State Assembly and Senate must accept the responsibility.

It is our belief that a compatible compromise is possible. We feel that legitimate professional baymen should have the right to set their nets. They are experts and they take their fish with minimum environmental disruption and very little waste. However, we feel that it is inexcusable for sportfishermen to try and profit from local abundance. It has been the fly-by-night gillnetting by sportfishermen that has caused the bulk of the problem. They waste fish, they are inexperienced at setting nets, they disrupt both man and the environment and they impinge upon the man who sets nets to feed his family.

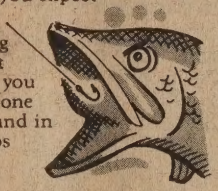
Thus, the answer lies in the licensing of commercial fishermen for the protection of sportsmen, commercial fishermen, and our fish stocks. We have broached this topic before and the DEC has responded with the idea of a $25 or $50 dollar fee. Of course this is ridiculous. There are thousands of sportfishermen who would be so willing to flop down a $25 dollar fee in order to enjoy the ''sport'' of gillnetting. And to some of them it is a sport. If a man can afford about $500 for the equipment needed to gillnet, he surely will not be inhibited by a $25 fee. We need a license fee that is in keeping with the problem that we are dealing with. Any fee should discourage casual

(Continued on page 50.)

Everything you need to know to choose the RIGHT fish hook ...but didn't know who to ask.

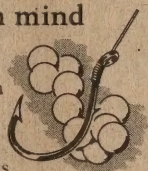
(Ask Eagle Claw)

Any dummy knows you don't catch little fish on big hooks! So it's no real trick to pick the size hook for the size fish you expect to catch.

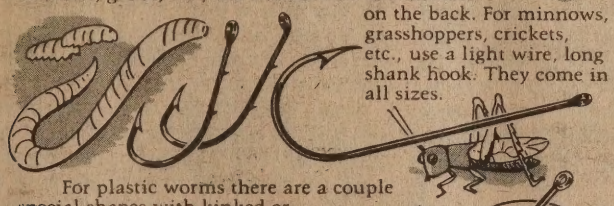


But size is only a small factor in choosing a fish hook—even though big fish DO, at times, bite on little hooks. So even when you pick a tiny hook, you better get the right one—because you don't want anything to stand in your way of landing a whopper that gulps down a bitty bait.

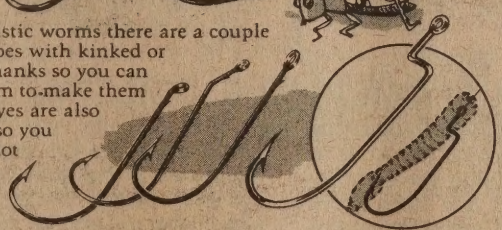
Here are some things to keep in mind when you're picking:

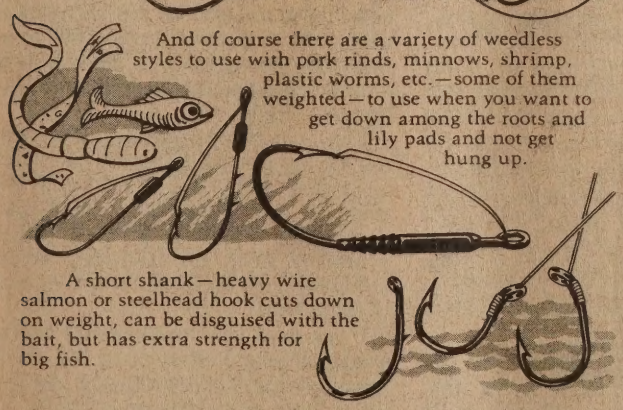


1. BAIT There's no way to string salmon eggs onto the hook you'd use for 10-inch plastic worms that appeal to 12 lb. bass! Use something like this: If you're using live baits such as night crawlers, grubs, etc., use a hook with bait holders on the back. For minnows, grasshoppers, crickets, etc., use a light wire, long shank hook. They come in all sizes.



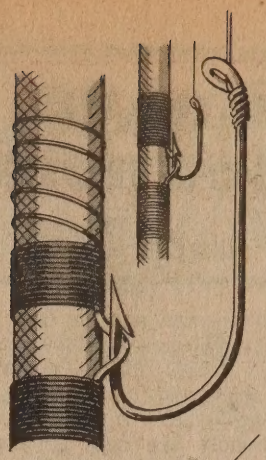
For plastic worms there are a couple special shapes with kinked or modified shanks so you can rig the worm to make them weedless. Eyes are also positioned so you can tie a knot that'll hold lunkers.





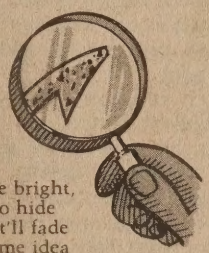
And of course there are a variety of weedless styles to use with pork rinds, minnows, shrimp, plastic worms, etc.—some of them weighted—to use when you want to get down among the roots and lily pads and not get hung up.

A short shank—heavy wire salmon or steelhead hook cuts down on weight, can be disguised with the bait, but has extra strength for big fish.

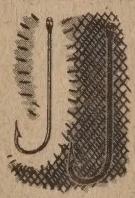


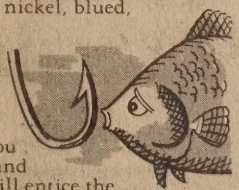
2. TACKLE As a general rule, the heavier the tackle, the bigger the hook. Ultra-light gear and freshwater fly rigs all take lightweight hooks. But you have to be sure small hooks are not so "soft" the hook won't hold on when you take a strike. A 10-inch brook trout can straighten out a hook that's not properly heat treated to make it strong.

Ultra-light gear is bringing in some mighty big fish when the right kind of hook is on the line—and a skillful fisherman holds the rod! By-and-large, hook size is going to be related to the line test and rod action you use. But the smaller a hook is, the tougher it has to be.



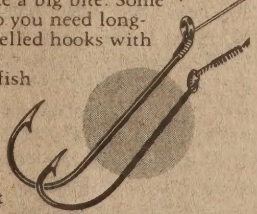
3. WATER Salty and brackish waters are tough on fish hooks, and you have to choose a hook that won't have lost its sharpness to corrosion by the second or third day. Or even through lunch! Stainless steel or cadmium plated hooks hold up. Different waters require different hook finishes. Some bright, some subdued. If you want to hide the hook, use something that'll fade into the background. The same idea applies in clear water, murky streams or deep ponds. Every tackle box needs an assortment of colors, gold, nickel, blued, bronze.





4. FISH Let's face it: Some fish simply won't "open wide." So you have to fit the hook to their mouths. Other fish strike wide open, so almost anything will do. To catch a nibbler, you have to use a size and shape hook that will entice the wily rascal to take a big bite. Some fish have teeth, so you need long-shank hooks or snelled hooks with tough leaders.

And some fish gulp everything—so you'll want a long-shank hook you can get a grip on to remove it.



But you don't want long-shank hooks for fish that usually get hooked in the lips. The shorter the better for them. (Now, how you get to know the "table manners" of fish is another subject—and you'll have to pick that up somewhere else.)

There's really nothing very scientific about choosing a fish hook... but a lot of science HAS gone into making Eagle Claw fish hooks. Which is why there are more than 1000 types and sizes. It takes that many to satisfy all the kinds of fishing and fishermen in the world—which we've been doing for more than 50 years.

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Sinker Bouncing SEABASS

with Matt Ahern

Until ten years ago, sea bass were the mainstay of Long Island's summer fishery. It was quite common to see party, charter and private boats carrying swinging loads of expectant anglers to the offshore sea bass grounds; each fisherman secure in the knowledge that he would soon return with a bulging sack of these delectable fish.

Catching sea bass was no problem. When baited hooks were lowered over one of the many local wrecks or rock piles, rods would immediately bend over under the weight of struggling fish. Over the rails would come handsome sea bass; double and triple-headers caused no comment.

Such was the great sea bass fishing enjoyed by generations of fishermen. No sinker bouncer of my acquaintance was ever skunked during the wonderful hey-days of sea bass fishing.

Then, problems suddenly began to arise in the fishery, and this excellent fishing soon came to a grinding halt.few sea bass were caught during the late sixties and early seventies, and the dearth of these willing biters was sorely felt by both angler and party boat skipper alike.

Scatterings of sea bass continued to be caught over the years by die-hard anglers who refused to surrender without a struggle, but they worked hard for the few fish they managed. Eventually, even these dedicated fishermen gave up, shrugged discouraged shoulders and plied their fish-catching abilities toward more available fish, patiently hoping against hope that the following summer would see the return of these much sought-after fish.

It appears now that their patience has been rewarded, because, wonder of wonders, over the past three years, sea bass have been more and more in the limelight; each succeeding year producing better than its predecessor.

Last summer, in fact, saw sea bass once again filling sacks for happy anglers. Not bulging sacks, to be sure, but a supply large enough to make the reappearance of these fish the subject of much conjecture: the consensus of all being that this summer will again produce its share of fish for the dedicated sea bass fisherman. Party boat skippers are again dreaming long dreams of possible fantastic fishing to come.

Captain Clark Bellows, Jr. enterprising skipper of the Shinnecock Canal party boat Capt. Clark is one fisherman who is a firm believer in the return of the sea bass. While discussing the phenomenal increase in the fishery, Captain Clark told me that during late summer last year he made several trips to the offshore wrecks and was surprised to see hundreds of sea bass come over the rails. He was quite enthusiastic over the fine fishing his passengers enjoyed.

Captain Clark also said that on one trip alone twenty passengers accounted for over one thousand good-size bass. Most fish averaged a pound and a half, with a sprinkling of humpbacks to five pounds and a six pounder being tops. This, indeed, is proof that sea bass fishing is on the upswing.

To enjoy this kind of fishing to the utmost, the angler should be equipped with suitable tackle. For inshore fishing in the bays, light to medium-weight spinning tackle can be used, but when fishing the offshore grounds where the water is deep and tidal currents strong, it's best to use a medium weight boat rod. Particularly is this so aboard party boats where spinning tackle is often frowned upon.

I've been using a seven-foot, medium weight conventional rod and Penn 155 reel for years while summer fishing offshore and find it ideal for sea bass. And too, it has the oomph to handle any outsize blackfish that may come my way.

When fishing bays and other inshore areas, ten pound test mono line is okay. Some fishermen use fifteen pound test, claiming the lighter line frays too easily on the rough bottom often encountered. The choice is yours, but you'll find that should currents be strong, the heavier line will make weighty sinkers mandatory and this in turn interferes with the fighting ability of the bass. And if light spinning tackle is used, the heavier sinker is going to put quite a set in the tip. Under these conditions, it's better to match the line with medium-weight outfit.

For offshore fishing, the angler will find thirty pound test mono works well. With it, holding bottom with five or six ounces of lead is usually no problem. About the only time I go to forty pound test is when I expect to fish a wreck with the similar rig snagging ability of the Iberia wreck off Long Beach.

This wreck is indeed "sticky". With the heavier mono, I have a better chance to salvage some part of the rig. Lighter line parts too easily when the necessary pressure to free the rig is put upon it.

Incidentally, while on this subject of wreck fishing, make up your mind that it's going to cost a certain amount of terminal tackle. It just can't be helped. Remember, if you're not being hung-up occasionally, you're not fishing where the action is. This applies not only to sea bass, but to blackfish and porgies as well especially blackfish.

Should you get hung-up, you may get free without too much difficulty—if you're lucky. Occasionally a fish will grab the bait and free the rig, but don't count on it.

When necessary, I find the best way to break off a line is to go about it systematically. Put the reel into free-spool and lay the rod aside. Never use the rod to exert pressure on a snagged rig. Not only is this bad for the rod, but you will enmesh the coils of mono deeply into the reel's arbor and have the devil's own time getting it free.

Grasp the slack line in your hands and apply pressure—gently at first. If this doesn't work, try releasing the line with a sudden snapping motion. Be sure the line is not knotted around your hand; you'll receive a bad cut, if it is.

If this doesn't free your rig after several attempts, you have one last resort which always works. When the movement of the boat creates slack in the line, take a couple of fast turns around the rail and let the rising of the boat on the next swell break it off for you If you are using the best mono you can afford, it will part at the snag, and you'll lose very little.

Don't cut or cigarette burn the line at the rod tip as some fishermen do. It may be quicker, but if you're fishing in deep water, it won't take many snaggings to deplete the line on your reel and you'll probably wind up standing around gnashing your teeth as others continue to catch fish.

If you must use the foregoing method, shrug off your loss as all in the fishing game, which it is; re-rig and get back down there as quickly as possible. You won't always get snagged, of course.

Rigging for sea bass is simplicity itself. You'll find most fishermen using the popular deep-sea high-low rig; one hook tied in a snell length above the sinker, and the other high enough to clear the first. The use of three-way

swivels isn't recommended. They foul too easily.

Instead, use two-inch dropper loops made with double-overhand knots. They won't cut into your line if pulled up slowly. You'll find most wreck bass are caught on the high hook. The lower hook is more likely to catch porgies and ling. Incidentally, should you find sea porgies stealing your bait, remove the lower hook and replace it with a 1/0 in any of the recommended styles listed below.

Being that all bass are blessed with large mouths, the sea bass is no exception. Therefore, the fisherman has some leeway in his hook selection. My favorite is the Sproat in size 3/0 to 5/0. Other hooks, such as the Beak or Claw styles, O'Shaughnessy, Limerick and Virginia in these sizes, can also be used.

It's best if these hooks are snelled to thirty or forty pound test leader material. (Don't use ordinary monofilament line for this. It will tangle about your main line if you do.) Anything lighter than the recommended size is apt to cause more hook-loss than need be when fouled. Don't worry about the heaviness of the leader material; sea bass aren't line shy.

Sinkers, of course, will vary in weight, depending upon where the fishing is being done; depth of water, and strength of tidal currents enter into their selection. As a rule, though, the fisherman can get by using sinkers ranging from five to eight ounces. Use bank style sinkers and be sure to use no more weight than actually needed. As mentioned before, you'll only cut into your fun should you do so.

Large sea bass should always be netted. Most fish will be found to be hooked well inside the mouth, but occasionally they are lip-hooked. Should it be a large fish, the weight alone is apt to pull the hook free when lifted aboard. Don't take chances with your fish; especially if you are in the pool.

I suppose skimmer clam and squid strips have accounted for more sea bass than any other bait. During winter, commercial fishermen down south bait up with squid and catch barrels of humpbacks for the market. The choice is yours.

Skimmer is the bait supplied aboard most party boats, therefore if a fisherman wishes to use squid, he will probably have to bring his own. You can check this beforehand, if you wish. From my own experience, except on special occasions, I've never noticed much difference in my catch when using either of these baits exclusively. Sea bass accept both baits with relish.

As with everything else in fishing, there is a right way and a wrong way to do the necessary things to put fish in your bucket. One of these is the proper method used to cut your bait.

Aboard a party boat, you'll find the

(Continued on page 49.)

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THE BOTTOM LINE

with Scott Simons

The Science of Fluke Fishing Part II

While it is true that fluke will take an unusually wide variety of bait, they do show a definite preference at times . . . often enough to make the selection of bait a critical factor for consistent catches. As with almost all the predators, if the fluke are feeding on a particular type of baitfish, such as spearing or sandeels, they will prefer that baitfish to any other offering . . .usually. So the fisherman's first priority in the bait selection process is to discover what the fluke are feeding on on that particular day or tide.

There are two manners of discovering this. First, **always** make it a practice to gut the first few fluke that are caught and examine the stomach contents. Disregard anything that looks like it is halfway or more through the digestive process . . . fish have a very slow digestive system, so anything that is half-digested may be several hours old and give you a false reading. Example: if the stomach contains several half-digested shrimp and a few fresh sandeels, use sandeels for bait . . . the fluke was probably feeding on the shrimp the previous tide at another location. The second method is to simply observe what baitfish are swimming around under the boat. If the water is black with schools of sandeels, it stands to reason that the fluke are feeding on them. Unfortunately for the angler, you don't know what the hot bait for the day is going to be before leaving the dock. So it is important to carry a selection of bait so that you may offer the fish a choice.

Acquiring a supply of bait for fluke fishing is no problem, as there is nothing wrong with the frozen variety. Small boxes of frozen spearing or sand eels are available in just about every bait and tackle outlet on the Island and frozen squid, either the preferred local or the California species, is available everywhere. Live killies can be purchased at virtually all of the fishing stations that rent boats in good fluking areas and to a smaller extent at the better stocked bait and tackle outlets. It's also a good idea to try and obtain some bait on your own in order to offer a wider variety. If you keep your boat in a slip or at a mooring, keep a bait trap over the side while you aren't there. Before you go fishing, make it a habit to pull up the trap and check out the goodies inside. The traps are relatively inexpensive at almost any bait and tackle shop, easy to maintain and they can be baited with any leftover bait at the end of a day's fishing.

Another method of acquiring your own fresh bait is to use an umbrella net right off the dock. This is simply a square piece of netting stretched over a metal frame with a line attached to the center. Bread or ground fish are placed in the center of the net, which is lowered a few feet into the water just far enough so that the angler can observe any baitfish swimming over the net as they eat the food. When a few baitfish are over the net it is simply jerked up onto the dock with one motion.

A seine of ten feet or longer is the most productive method of catching baitfish in both variety and quantity but it requires the work of two anglers. But it can be a lot of fun, particularly if turned into a family outing. Pick an area in the bay where the water depth doesn't change too drastically. The seine is taken into the water with one person at each end, stretched out parallel with the beach and then slowly dragged toward the shoreline, theoretically capturing everything swimming between the net and beach. Killies, spearing, sandeels, baby blowfish and flounder, snappers and a wide variety of crabs will often be taken with a seine.

The "big five" of fluke baits are killies, spearing, sandeels, squid and strip baits. Let's take a look at the first four this week and discuss when to use them, how to rig each and their advantages. Next week we'll go into the art of using strip baits for fluke.

KILLIES: The primary advantage of using killies for bait is that they are easily purchased live. They are hardy and stay alive for long periods of time when kept in a bait car or kept moist. However, don't try to keep killies alive in a plastic bucket . . . the water will quickly heat up and the killies will exhaust the supply of oxygen and you will have dead bait in short order.

When drifting or trolling the killy should be hooked lightly through the lips on a 1/0 or 2/0 gold beak hook. **Never** hook a killy through the back or tail when drifting at a moderate or fast speed. Even fluke know that baitfish don't swim sideways or backwards unless something is drastically wrong. When fishing in quiet waters, such as the flats where there is little current, the killy may be hooked through the tail and given his head. **[See diagram A.]**

During this past winter I spent many nights giving a slide show lecture on fluke fishing to many of the local fishing clubs around the Island. I covered bottom formations, drifting techniques and bait. Invariably, at the end of the lecture when the question and answer session started, one question was always asked. "Don't you ever use killies for bait?" My answer was and is no, the result of a simple observation: after gutting virtually hundreds of fluke, I have found a hundred or more sandeels for every killy . . . fifty or more spearing . . . a score or more of mullet . . . and approximately a twelve to one ratio of snappers, bergalls, blowfish and other small fish for every killy. The simple fact of the matter is that the killy just doesn't play a large part in the fluke's diet. This is not to say, however, that you can't catch fluke on killies - you can and will, but just not as many as on other baits that are a larger part of the fluke's diet.

SPEARING: Spearing, also known as shiners or silversides, is an excellent bait for fluke that is a primary part of their diet. While the frozen variety is an effective bait, fresh-dead should be used whenever available. However, they are impossible to keep alive, and there would really be no advantage in doing so.

Spearing are usually sold in bait and tackle outlets in two sizes: large or "jumbo" for fluke and small for snapper fishing. Large and medium size spearing should be rigged by passing the hook through the eye sockets, which are relatively tough and will allow the bait to remain on the hook for the longest period of time. (See diagram B.) Large or jumbo spearing may also be fished on the tandem hook rig as described in part one of this series. The top hook is placed through the eye sockets and the bottom "stinger" hook is imbedded near the tail. (See diagram C.) If only the smaller spearing normally used for snapper fishing is available, place two or three on each hook through the eyes as shown in diagram D. This gives the rig the appearance of being a small school of baitfish, and I have found it to be a very effective for both drifting and trolling.

SAND EELS: Also known as sand launce, sand eels are the most productive baitfish that a fisherman can use for fluke fishing. This is particularly true early in the season during June and July, when they are the predominate baitfish in our waters and the primary part of the fluke's diet. They may be rigged in the same methods as spearing, as shown in

(Continued on page 49.)

DIAGRAM A.
KILLIES

DIAGRAM E.
SQUID STRIP

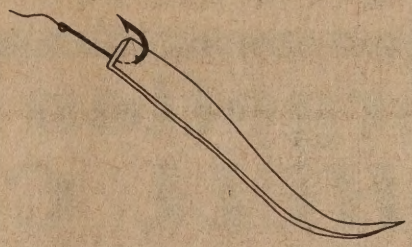


DIAGRAM B.
SANDEELS & SPEARING

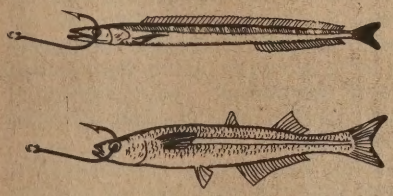


DIAGRAM F.
HAM & EGGS "Combo" Bait

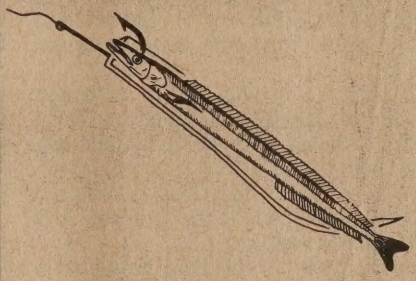


DIAGRAM C.
LARGE
SAND EELS
& SPEARING

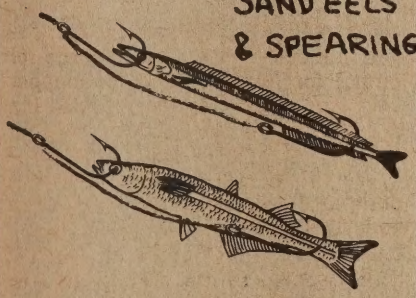


DIAGRAM G.
SQUID HEAD

DIAGRAM D.
SMALL
SAND EELS
& SPEARING

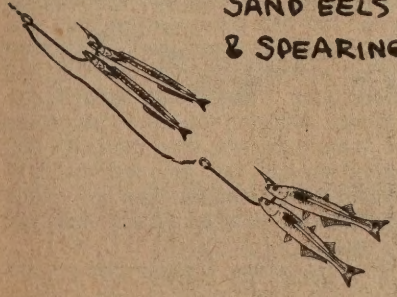
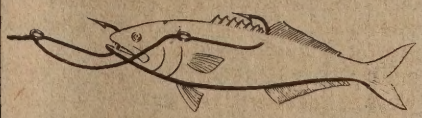


DIAGRAM H.
SNAPPERS, SMELT, SARDINES



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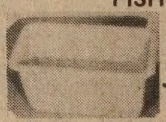

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BASS FISHING with Capt. John DeMaio

The Forgotten Bait: SOFT SHELL CRABS Part II

Eels will present a big problem. Unless, of course, you like fried eels with lemon juice. They are delicious. Plus, you can save the skins for bass lures. Whether you eat them or not, eels can be a messy problem trying to unhook. What I suggest is a simple degorger that can be fashioned over a stove burner in your kitchen. Take an ordinary ice pick and heat the last 2 inches. Then bend it over to make a 'U' shape. Placing a nail in between the bend will give you the needed width between the 'u'.

Do not allow the eel to squirm about. Leave it hanging. Place the bend in the ice pick over the shank of the hook and force it down to the bend of the hook. The more the eel wiggles, the better. In this manner the eel is never touched and you avoid the slime. As the eel drops from the hook try to get him to land in your bucket or over the side. Whichever you prefer.

Where to fish the soft shell crab? Any place you may normally catch a bass. Also, any place you find blue claws. This will include, bridge, piers, channel banks, and very important, the tidal flats. When I say flats, I am referring to shallow water areas situated amongst the marshes. Of course, these flats should be fished at night. Bass will shy away from open shallow water in bright daylight.

All the crab fishing I have done was always from a stationary position. Never drifting. Anchor up or make the boat fast to a piling and give it some time. Sometimes a waiting period is required to allow the smell of the crab to lure some fish around.

An old trick for the flats is to cast a surface plug for a few minutes in the direction you intend to fish. The noise and activity can arouse a bass to the area. He may look at the plug and let it go by like the hunk of junk it is, but the delicious aroma of a soft shell crab, (even without the slice of tomato) is too good to pass up.

How to fish the flats. Approach your fishing area quietly. If possible, stop the engine and allow the boat to drift in with the tide or wind. Slip the anchor over very easily and try not to let it drag. A noisy anchor will frighten a bass quicker than a running engine. Especially an anchor dragging along the bottom. Eliminate the chain. Chains make a lot of noise. In shallow water they are not needed. Once the anchor is holding you can begin fishing by casting the crab bait off into the distance. Your chances of catching a bass under the boat is nil. So go for a little distance.

Casting a crab bait can be tricky. You cannot whip the rod. This will tear the bait from the hook. (using nylon thread to hold the bait on is a waste of time and more trouble than helpful). A long looping cast is best. Throw the bait high in the air and allow it to land with a splat on the water. This additional noise, like the plug, will arouse the bass. The fish will begin to associate the 'splat' to the crab bait. You hope! Anyway it cannot hurt. Try it.

Expecting a heavy strike is a mistake. The bass will gently mouth the bait as he moves away with it. You can tell how well he has the bait by the rate of speed the line leaves the reel. When the fish is moving fast, sock him. Make sure you hit him hard with a long quick swing. This long swing will eliminate the slack and stretch, and drive home the hook. Thumb the spool very lightly as the fish takes line. Making sure not to allow the bass to feel any resistance. Experience is needed for the proper timing to set the hook.

Another school of thought suggests that you set the hook immediately. No sooner the fish picks up the bait, you swing back. This may work. I use that method with other type bait fishing and it does work. I have never tried it with crab bait. Allowing the fish to take some line is more exciting than the quick pull method anyway. One gets the feeling of being in the big leagues. Now don't put a fighting chair in your garvey hull, not just yet.

Fishing a bridge. If the bridge you are fishing has a hard running tide, I would advise you fish the slack water periods.

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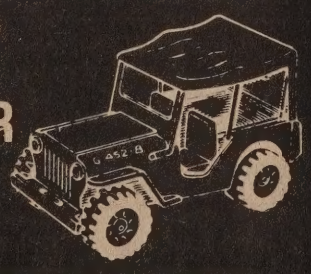

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While the tide is pushing hard, try using lures. Fish tight to the poles or bridge supports. Tie directly on to the bridge and fish up and down along side the poles. You may want the heavier line here. The closer you are to the poles, the better off. That is a rule of thumb. Not a certainty. The fishing may, I say may, be better head of, or behind the bridge. Some underwater structure of good bottom may cause such a possibility. In most cases, fish tight to the bridge.

Crabs hang on the growth covered pilings. Striped bass swim amongst these supports scooping up the soft ones. This brings us to an important trick in using the crab around bridges, tracks, and such. After letting the line down to the bottom, (Remember, no more weight than needed) reel up about a foot or two and let the bait hang there. I could give several reasons why this works better than leaving it on the bottom, but who the hell cares. I am probably wrong anyway. As long as it works, that's what counts.

If catching your own softies is too much of a problem for you, buy them. This can be done very easily. Especially in the summer months. Just get out of bed early and be at the Fulton Fish Market no later than 6:30 A.M.

The market is a series of independent wholesale seafood operators. All under one big roof. Just about all of them handle soft shell crabs. You can buy them on the 'pedal'. As any other market. See what you like, and ask the man "How much."

Be prepared to buy at least a couple of dozen. Soft crabs come in 'trays'. The market likes to sell by the tray. Don't ask for half a dozen. A couple of visits will sharpen your marketing skills. You will be very surprised how cheaply you can buy soft crabs. Remember, crabs are sold live and therefore, are very perishable. Prime stuff is expensive. So who cares. You're not going to eat them, only use them for bait. As long as the crab does not smell, or will not smell by the time he is used for bait, you are okay. At the end of a market day, somewhere around 7 o'clock, I have seen trays of crabs dumped. They were dead and never would be saleable the following morning. The market is closed Saturday and Sunday, so Friday is a good day for bargains.

Now all that sounds pretty good. (A mess of crabs for ten bucks maybe.) There is one drawback. Crab bait from out of town, will not work as well as local crabs. This has been proven by myself and a few friends of mine. Having tried fishing both local and market bait at the same time has given me opportunity to see the difference. Local bait is far superior. The difference is usually subtle and not great enough for me to suggest you not to use market crabs.

That's it folks! Where to fish is your problem. Basic knowledge and several tricks in here prepares you for a good start. Maybe you can add a few. If not now, after this season. I spared you my relating the experiences I had in fishing soft crabs. Vivid accounts of 15 pounders exploding 3 feet into the air from out of 2 feet of water. Muggy summer nights without a breeze. Hands and face smeared with insect repellent. Flies and gnats crawling over the bait. A couple hundred pounds of bass over the bottom of the boat. Chilly daybreaks and no coffee left in the thermos. Oh yeah!

Fishermen do not live in the past. Not active and agressive fishermen. What constitutes good fishing is relative to the standard of fishing at present. This does not mean that crab fishing has had its day, Not at all. Blue claws were missing for such a long time their popularity lost out because of the lack, not the fashion. A return to crabs as a summer bass bait in the bays, now that they have returned, makes sense. Give it a try. Three to six crabs for bait, in between the lure fishing, is enough for experimenting. Who wants to eat a soft crab sandwich anyway? Even with the slice of tomato.

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CONSERVATION COMMENTS *by Al Ristori*

The tuna industry got a severe jolt several weeks ago when U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey banned the killing of porpoise during the tuna seining operation, effective May 31st. This effectively prevents the tuna boat from setting on schools of valuable yellowfin tuna that swim with porpoise in the eastern tropical Pacific. Coming on top of the Presidents' signing of the 200 mile limit bill, this represents a second body blow to what has been a very prosperous industry with exceptionally good government connections.

Prior to 1960, tuna fishing was a "romantic" industry. The tuna were captured by chumming with live bait, a method that was inefficient enough to preserve the species and hard enough to discourage a great deal of competition. Since then all the romance has gone out of the industry and intense competition has led to a "cut throat" attitude whereby nothing is allowed to stand in the way of a good catch. Super seiners owned by big corporations travel thousands of miles to locate the rapidly diminishing schools of tuna (to all intents and purposes, tuna were "fished out" off the California coast decades ago) which bring ever higher prices. As the tuna become scarcer, the aid of porpoises in locating them becomes more critical and the industry claims that over 90 percent of the net sets are now "on porpoise"!

The tunamen have no use for the porpoise, other than to locate tuna, and release those that survive. The problem is that many porpoises panic and suffocate in the net. The dead bodies are then dumped at sea—a total loss to mankind! When the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed in 1972, Congress gave the industry a couple of years in which to develop means to prevent this slaughter. Government help was also provided. Porpoise mortality did drop from 175,000 in 1973 to 98,700 in 1974 and the industry got another extension. However, this particular industry isn't one that will let an environmental concern interfere with its profits. As soon as the heat was off, porpoise mortality climbed back up to 134,000!

Environmentalists sued the government, contending that the Commerce Department had acted unlawfully under the Marine Mammal Protection Act by issuing licenses to the tuna fishermen without knowing the impact on the porpoise populations. Judge Richey upheld that contention and ordered a halt to fishing "on porpoise" at least until National Marine Fisheries Service officials are able to determine the impact it is having on the capability of affected porpoise stocks to remain at optimum sustained population levels. Certainly, the tuna industry has made no serious attempt to adhere to the language of the 1972 bill, which gave them two years to develop techniques that would reduce incidental killing of porpoises to "insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate."

Attempts are presently underway in Congress to soften the impact of the judge's decision by allowing the industry to continue its normal operations all throughout the year while NMFS tries to come up with the optimum sustained population level data for the affected species of porpoise. Personally, I'd like to see this effort defeated. For too long the tuna industry has enjoyed unprecedented protection in its operations, which have frequently been unethical and wasteful, if not downright illegal. While other American companies extracting natural resources from the lands and waters of foreign countries had to do so in accordance with those countries laws and at their own risk, the tuna industry blatently defied the 200 mile limits of many countries and got the financial backing of the State Department as they did everything possible to spread anti-Americanism throughout South and Central America. They fought a 200 mile limit for our country as that might mean an end to their own special racket. At the beginning their economic power ruled the day, but during the past couple of years, their ability to offset the best interests of the majority waned.

The attitude of the tuna industry in the case of the Marine Mammal Protection Act was no different than their disregard of the authority and sensibilities of foreign countries. Despite government help, they made no serious attempt to prevent the slaughter of incredible numbers of porpoise. If you or I were to kill even one porpoise for a "good purpose, such as food or bait, we would be fined, and possibly imprisoned. How can we justify such actions when a wealthy industry is allowed to kill hundreds of thousands, all of which are totally wasted? Let your congressman and senators know how you feel about this issue and ask them to vote against any further exemption for the tuna industry to continue killing porpoise. Your congressman can be reached at House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515; while the senators address is United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

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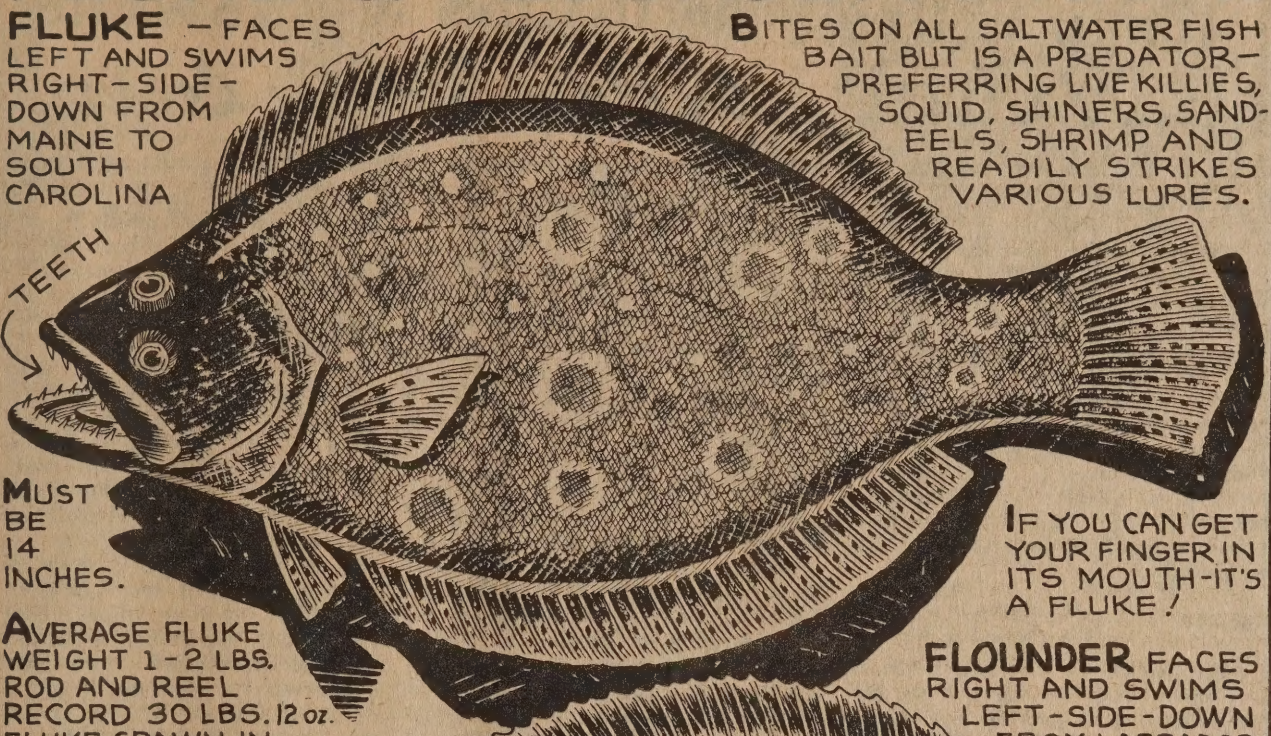
BITES ON ALL SALTWATER FISH BAIT BUT IS A PREDATOR – PREFERRING LIVE KILLIES, SQUID, SHINERS, SAND-EELS, SHRIMP AND READILY STRIKES VARIOUS LURES.



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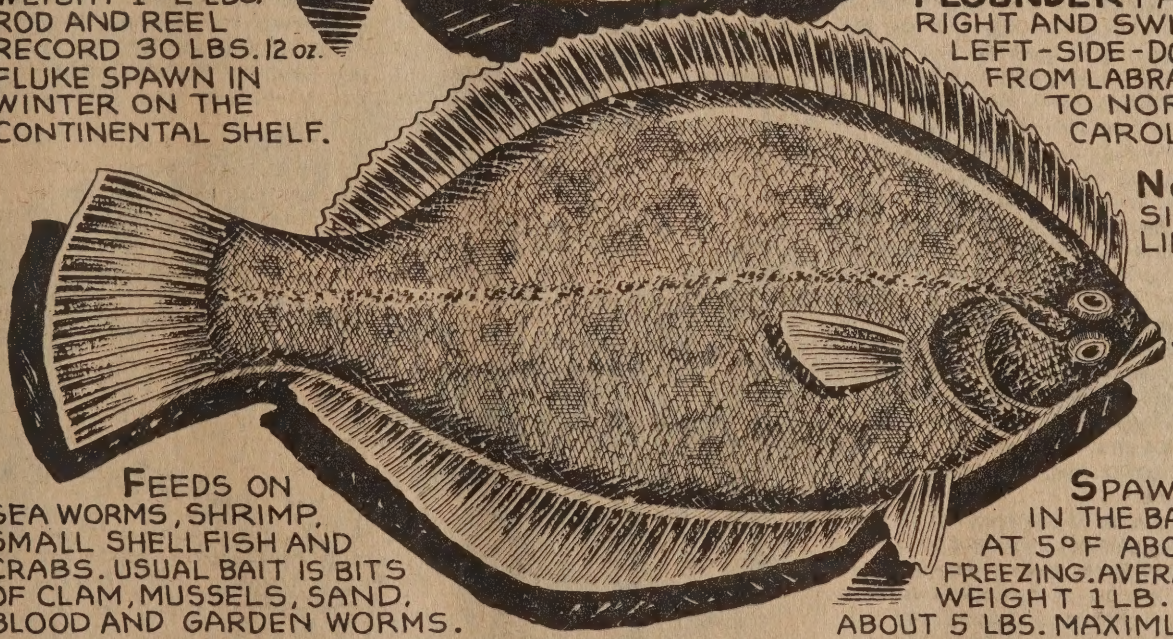

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THE FLUKE LAW – WARNING TO ANGLERS – DON'T TAKE SHORTS.

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SECTION 71-0921-2A OF THE LAW SETS THE FINES AT $25 MINIMUM TO $100 MAXIMUM

FINES VARY ACCORDING TO HOW MANY SHORTS ARE TAKEN. IT IS *NOT* $25 – $100 PER FISH, BUT FOR THE VIOLATION. *EVERYONE* IN THE BOAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLATION AND WILL RECEIVE A TICKET IF THEY ARE 16 YEARS OR OLDER. UNDER 16 IT'S FAMILY COURT, WARNINGS ETC. *THE FLUKE LAW IS BEING STRICTLY ENFORCED.*

FOR EXAMPLE – IF THERE ARE FIVE FISHERMEN AND ONE SHORT FLUKE IN THE BOAT – *EVERYBODY GETS A TICKET!* AND DON'T SAY YOU THOUGHT IT WAS A FLOUNDER!

BY FRED GUARDINEER AT THE REQUEST OF N.Y. STATE CONSERVATION OFFICERS.

ASK THE CAPTAIN

OPINIONS & ANSWERS

by Capt. Ronnie Lepper

Question: Bob Nelson, Brooklyn, N.Y.

We have been trying to catch a giant tuna at the Mudhole for 2 years, without success. Not only did we not catch anything, but we didn't see anything either. We tried fishing for them at least 2 days a week during the entire Tuna season. My friends and myself have boated loads of fish in the 20 to 40 lb. class, but nothing bigger. Are there any special tricks or is it just a matter of luck? We start fishing in mid September and end in mid October as we like bass fishing and do have good results fishing for them.

Answer:

First of all you are not fishing the most productive times. I've had my first big fish as early as August 8th with a few friends and myself being the only boats there. There are lots of big fish over 300 pounds caught well into November. I would safely say that most giants caught at the Mudhole are taken in late October and early November. I can hear the tuna pros on the radio while I'm bass fishing. At that late time of the year, there are very few boats and this is definitely an important factor, meaning, the fewer boats, the better the fishing. Most of the big fish are caught during the week, usually very early or late in the day. I personally, find big fresh butterfish the best bait, yet others prefer live whiting or ling. Most of my hits come on mono leaders (300 lb. test.) not wire, using a small hook.

The majority of hits occur at 40 to 50 feet down and close to the boat (within 50 feet), with chunk bait (mackerel and bunkers cut up) being more important than chum. My biggest fish at the Hole was 527 pounds, but I have seen fish caught over 600 pounds. It is surely a fickle place to fish and produces spasmodically at best. Luck in being there at the right time is a decisive factor. I've seen times when 8 or 10 boats hook up at the same time on all different baits at all different depths. Yet, other times huge schools will push water right past your boat and never look at your bait. There are a few tricks but they are mentioned in any good book on tuna fishing. You have to hook up sooner or later. Everyone who stays with it usually does, and that's when your "problems" really begin!)

Question: Brian McMourough, Yonkers, N.Y.

I've read and heard about the big bass taken at Sandy Hook in the spring. I would like to try fishing that area myself and would appreciate any help I can get as far as where, when and which lures to use.

Answer:

Good fishing at the hook for big bass usually starts in late May and extends through the month of June. The best producing areas are Monmouth Beach, the Highlands, Sandy Hook Rip (which lies just west of the Sandy Hook Channel), Flynns Knoll, and Romer Shoals. All of these areas are listed clearly on the #1215 chart. Wire line is a must for this type of fishing along with a good supply of white bunker spoons, big Danny trolling plugs, (last year white was best color), umbrella rigs (dark red and black), and lastly 1 to 2 ounce bucktails of the parachute style. The Almightly Squid is a good catcher in white, making sure to use pork rind. Live bunkers are another must and can be purchased at the pound nets just inside and south of Sandy Hook. The price is pretty steep on live bait, no less than $.50 per piece and you should be there by 6 a.m. the very latest, or the bait will be gone. Keep your eye on the charter boats and you will know what to use that day as these fellows fish 7 days per week, and they always know what's going on. Once you know what to use, try to watch how they use it. (Boat speed, location, drift area, direction of drifts, etc.) Try to be courteous and do not cut them off or troll over their lines. You will find most of them will be very helpful if not abused. If you still find it hard to put it all together, try chartering a good boat. You will be surprised how much money and time that can save. Good luck.

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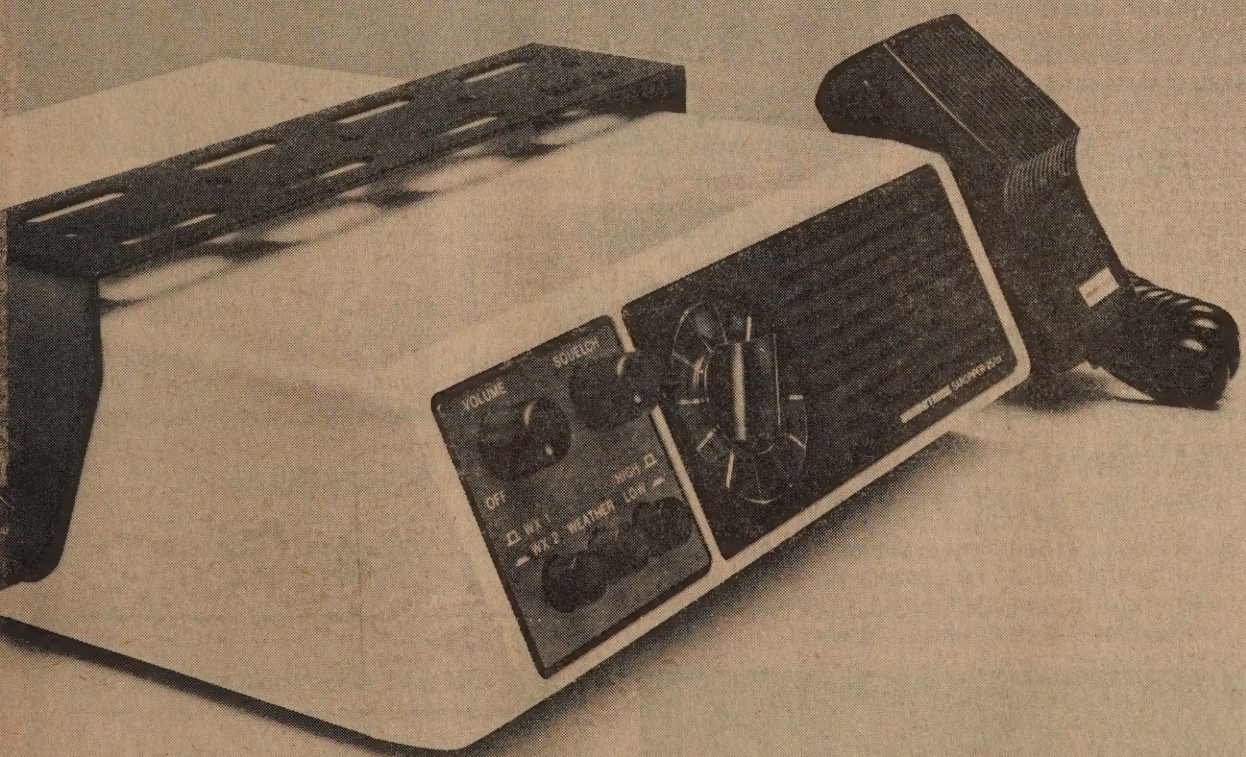

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Diving For Bass: THE MONTAUK SYSTEM

by Capt. Ron D'Albora

Ed. Note: **Ron D'Albora has been an active spear fisherman for over 25 years. He is currently operating the Gone Fishing Marina in Montauk, and caters to Fishermen, skin divers, and scuba divers.**

In order to shoot a bass, two factors must be evident. First, the bass must be there and second, you should be able to see him. Sure, there are many known local waters with pretty good fishing at certain times of the season; but for over all, consistent, day-in and day-out bass populations with good visibility, it is common knowledge that Montauk Point offers the best there is and that includes Rhode Island, Cuttyhunk and what have you.

Pretty strong words? Well consider this—'Spearfishing' (no tanks) at moderate depths of 15' to 40' has steadily produced season bass catches for myself averaging three-thousand pounds. This has been accomplished primarily on one day of a week, and usually on a heavily trafficked Sunday at that. Since working at Montauk the past several years, and being afforded more drive time, naturally my season catches have increased proportionately.

I'm not implying that these fish jump on your spear, I'm just stating that the fish are there to begin with. How to get them is the first problem. No need to get into any argument about the means of reaching the hunting grounds. Beach access through the surf would come in a poor second, even if there were any legal points of entry left. That leaves the #1 method—boat. Strike out small dingys, collapsible boats and under-powered craft. It's usually too rough, windy, foggy or a combination of all three. Forget about larger craft, especially inboards because of their lack of maneuverability.

The ideal dive boat operating out of Montauk for normal conditions will be a 16 to 19 footer, capable of handling 3 to 4 divers. The boat should be wide enough to carry up to 4 clumsy divers, powered enough to easily transport 4 heavy divers, yet with a low enough freeboard to get in and out with ease. A hoisted dive flag while actually diving is mandatory. A compass is very important for navigating in the fog and a depth recorder is a must item that eliminates

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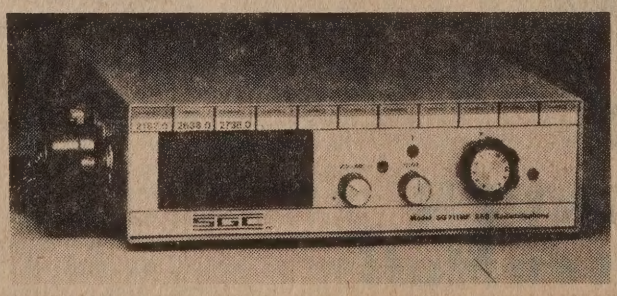

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much guess work in locating productive reefs.

The boat is never anchored, but allowed to drift. This usually keeps the boat in close proximity to the floating divers. The divers, never more than 2 in the water at a time, use the one man up, one down principle. That is, one man dives, takes his hook or shot, then surfaces while the other man on the surface relaxes and catches his breath. When the first man surfaces the second man heads down to the bottom—all the way, because that's where the bass hang out. The advantages of this tactic are obvious. More ground is covered, and in the event a school is located, the divers signal the boatman, reenter the boat and move upstream or upwind over the area to relocate the school.

The diver should use a dependable reel equipped weapon. Since choice of spearguns are a matter of opinion, I can only state that what I have been using for the last 20 years seems to work fine for me.

I use a beefed up 3 rubber Arbulete which can be called the 30-30 of underwater weapons. As explained to me a long time ago, "the gun doesn't make the hunter, the man does." But regardless of what type weapon you do use, it must be capable of slicing through a fish at a range of 6 to 8 feet and must be equipped with a reel containing 100 foot of line. The type head you use will greatly enhance penetration if it is slim and narrow, and obviously it should be of the detachable variety. The reel's capacity must be great—100 feet or more. There will be occasions when the shaft may lodge between rocks or in a fish too hot to handle, and at 30 or 40 feet with less than a full lung of air remaining, this can become a serious problem. By releasing line off the reel and heading for the surface, one can save his shaft, his fish and/or his life.

When approaching the bottom on a dive, care should be taken to slow up the last few feet. Even though visibility is usually quite good in this area, there is always the possibility of coming down into a coil of trolling wire, a goosefish's mouth or, worse still, spooking some bass that are quietly lurking in the immediate vicinity. Bass are much less wary when approached on a horizontal plane than when dive bombed upon. Actually, when bass are seen, the best chance lies with relaxing and keeping perfectly still. The chances are that some fish or at least a single fish will approach you if only out of curiosity. The best shot exists when the fish circles you to a point where he comes into direct range of your gun broadside. Here, the shot should be taken so that the spear head will penetrate just to the rear of the gill plate and on plane with the eyeball. Other odd shots include high on the mid-section

(Continued on page 49.)

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BASS MISTER!

by Ron Miller

I was out alone on that earlier evening, with a stiff breeze blowing from the south that made it almost unnecessary for me to cast. The waves were carrying the light canoe along at trolling speed, so I simply lobbed the six inch black wiggle snake behind me and let the drift do all the work. The first strike nearly stopped the canoe. I set the hook and began to play the fish, but he had other ideas. I watched the taut fluorescent line in the falling light as it pulled away and began to rise to the surface, indicating this fish was going to jump. When this one broke the surface I knew I had that long sought after, mounting sized, lunker on the end of my line. We fought each other for a full five minutes, during which he gave a couple of closer full length leaps just to show me he hadn't gotten any smaller, before he rose again, this time just a rods length away from the canoe. He swam just under the surface, and with a thrust of his tail, raised his head and shoulders above the water and with a vigorous, heartbreaking shake of his huge head, sent the lead-headed jig flying free. On retrieving the lure, I saw that he had straightened the hook so that it was L-shaped. I knew I would have to come back for this lunker with a little heavier terminal tackle.

Changing jigheads, I lobbed the lure out behind me again. In less time than it took for the wiggle snake to hit bottom, I had another fish on. This one was nowhere near the size of "Old Hook Straightener", but he put up a good fight until he ran into my net. In less than two hours, a total of five two pound bass found their fateful way to my stringer.

The Indians of Long Island were right when they named legendary "Ronkonkumack", new anglicized to Ronkonkoma. The loose translation to the language of the Great American Bass Hunter means: "The Bounds of The Fishing Place."

Lake Ronkonkoma, located in the center of Long Island, fifty-five miles from New York City and about three miles north of Long Island Expressway off Exit 59, has many entertaining mysteries and legends. In 1874 one writer said; "The Indians appeared to have regarded Ronkonkoma Pond with an awe filled veneration. They considered its depth unfathomable and believed that the fish were placed there by the Great Spirit. They refused to eat them, regarding them as super beings."

A favorite story of the Indians was about a Princess who, after a broken romance, tied weights to her body, paddled out into the middle of the lake and slipped over the side of her canoe, disappearing into the depths. The regretful lover went to the lake and dove in, in an unsuccessful attempt to recover the body. Some weeks later, so the story goes, the body minus the weights, was found floating in a river in Connecticut, recovered, and brought back to Long Island to be buried by the parents in the royal cemetery of the Indians at Montauk Point. (This writer's observation on the travelling involved is that they probably did it all by canoe or horseback, which far surpassed the then non-existant and now famous (?) Long Island Railroad.)

The Indians believed that the spirit of the drowned princess haunted the lake and caused the mysterious agitation of the water, whirlpools, moaning sounds heard from the middle of the lake at night and other strange happenings. Today's meaning of sounds from the lake are easily explained. They emanate from the throats of the members of the local B.A.S.S. Chapter on the loss of another Haug!

Mysterious enough are the sudden changes from a mirrorlike pond to a choppy sea with little or no warning. I have been on this lake when, on a bright sunny day, a blanketing fog came seemingly from nowhere to envelop the lake in its mist.

A reverse and gorey version of the unhappy princess was told about a Narragansett chieftain who drowned in the Connecticut River across Long Island Sound and the body was later found in Lake Ronkonkoma. Since there was bad blood between the tribes, the Indians living in the vicinity of the lake desecrated the body and sent it back to the Narragansetts in pieces.

The theory of the underground outlets given birth by these legends has been dismissed as a result of a U.S. Geological survey as recently as the 1950's. An excerpt from one report indicates that if there were an underground outlet to the Atlantic Ocean or Long Island Sound, the lake being some fifty feet above sea level, would drain out through the outlet, so no outlet exists.

While the lake is for the most part between ten and fifteen feet deep, there are several large holes scattered about, ranging in depth from twenty to sixty five feet. In July of 1954, two divers attempted to probe the depths of the deepest hole. One of them descended to fourty feet, but each time he tried to go deeper, he hit a layer of unbearably cold ice water. This hole is off the Southwest corner of the lake, where a lunker largemouth of over nine and one half pounds was taken several years ago.

Two days after my losing battle with a close relative of this trophy bass, my fishing partner John Tomin and I returned to the lake for another try at "Ole Hook Straightener". It was the kind of cloudy, overcast morning that John and I hope for on our fishing trips. We had launched my canoe on the southern shore of the lake, and paddled quickly to the southeast corner. There was a soft but steady breeze that would carry us in a northerly drift along the "Stretch", as it has become known, on the east side of this 229 acre lake, and we were filled with eager anticipation of some heavy fishing. Living less than a five minute drive from this legendary lake, we fish it regularly but have not often come up with a limit catch. On this particular morning we both felt that this trip would be different. Maybe it was the spirit of the Princess or maybe it was my own experience of two nights earlier that led me to believe there would be increased action.

On this morning, we had our tackle boxes loaded with the usual assortment of lures and equipment, but previous experience this year on other lakes and ponds on Long Island had given us the decision to stick to only one lure that we knew was a proven producer. My rods were rigged with a slip sinker and a monel hook, on which I mounted a six inch black Mr. Twister Wiggle-Snake, while John's were set up with the purple Fork-tail leeches on a stand-up jig head. John hadn't seen what my big bass did to that hook.

As we drifted, we cast in a semi-circular pattern around the canoe, John working the fore half of the circle & I the aft. We kept the drift about fifty yards offshore with one or two occasional paddle strokes, but had no action. As we neared the northeast corner of the lake, we met another fisherman who is familiar to almost every bass hunter on Long Island. The old German waved cheerfully from his little white dinghy, with its ever present killie pet bobbing along behind. "Get any big ones this morning?" I asked. "Nussing goot, only small vuns", was the answer. From what

I have seen of his catches, small is anything from under five pounds, so we asked what he was using for bait if other than killies. "Spinner bait mit bucktails," was his terse reply. When I asked what results he had with the killies, he said he had no action at all. As he trolled away under a power of a small electric motor, we began searching our tackle boxes for spinner baits, We dug out two, and mounted the hooks with our black snakes and leeches.

To our delight, the wind had changed direction and was now carrying us Southward back along the path we had just covered. After several casts, John was into a good fish. I was retrieving my lure at a faster than usual pace to get out of his way and to net the bass for him when I felt the familiar tapping on my line. Setting the hook, I hollered "Every man for himself!", and began to do battle with a fine two pound bass. As I let him run while keeping the rod tip high with one hand, I quickly reached below my seat for the anchor, and dropped it unceremoniously over the side. We had found the hole! Returning to the business at hand, I worked the bass closer to the canoe in a race with John to keep our fish apart and avoid tangled lines. Both were landed seconds apart, compared and found to be twins.

Stringing our trophies, we continued to cast, fanning the area for our wiggling lures. It was the wildest bass fishing we had ever witnessed. On every other cast we had a fish on, and every one put on a aerial act that would put a smallmouth to shame. We hooked over thirty bass, and landed all but six. When our stringers were full, we began to cull for size, keeping the fish in the two pound range and releasing the smaller fish to come back and play another day. It was the finest day of fishing we can remember. John kept saying, "I'm gonna wake up in five minutes and find out I've been dreaming."

At one point, John was into a good fish that had circled to the rear of the canoe. I was changing lures, so I stopped to grab the landing net and sat waiting with the handle across my lap and the head out over the water, ready for the fish to show near the boat. It leaped a few feet out, went down deep and came up again, this time next to the canoe. I didn't move. There was no need to. The two pound bass jumped clear out of the water an down into the waiting net. I could swear I heard an "Oops!" from the fish. I suggested that we return to shore for another net and then just drift around waiting for them to jump in, but my partner insisted on the proven conventional method.

With the action the way it was, we began to experiment with different lures. Each time we changed, it was as though we were trying not to catch fish.

A happy fisherman with a fine catch, six of the eight went home to be dipped in batter and deep fried for dinner, a fine end to a beautiful day.

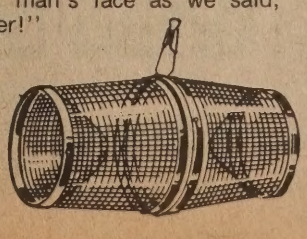
Switching back to the wiggle snakes, we caught bass. We tried floaters, deep divers, spoons and even other plastic worm baits. Each time, the action stopped. Back to the twisters, even without the spinner rig, and we were back in action. No work for the taxidermist as I had hoped for, but our combined catches were rapidly approaching tournament tonnage. At one point, I had just landed another fine fish and was putting him on my stringer, and had let the lure drop over the side after removing it from the bass' mouth. As I lowered the stringer into the water, my rod dipped sharply. I thought the momentary unbalancing of the canoe was causing my rod to fall overboard. To my happy surprise, another bass was trying to steal my rod the hard way.

Our equipment is fairly simple. John favors ultralight tackle, and stubbornly fishes all areas with two or four pound test line. I like a little more muscle, and stick to a light action rod and high speed spinning reel loaded with eight pound test line. For really heavy weed beds and heavy lures I switch spools to fourteen pound test. Our spools are loaded with fluorescent line so that we can be aware of the fish's direction after a strike, and it also helps to detect a light pickup just a little bit faster when keeping your eye on the line. Our tackle boxes are full of the usual assortment of plastic worms, floating, diving and popping plugs, and in my case, fly rod bass bugs and trout flies. I haven't quite converted John to the fine art of fly fishing just yet, maybe next season I'll get him.

Our biggest advantage is my boat. The fifteen foot Grumman canoe gets us waterborne on all of Long Island's waterways. She is faster and quieter than most bass boats (given the limitation of electric motors). On ponds where even the electric motors are prohibited, the canoe is a speed boat compared to the heavier and less maneuverable Jon boats, particularly those laden with depth sounders, swivel chairs, automatic anchor rigs and what have you. We welcome the small electric motor, but the rest of the gear seems superfluous.

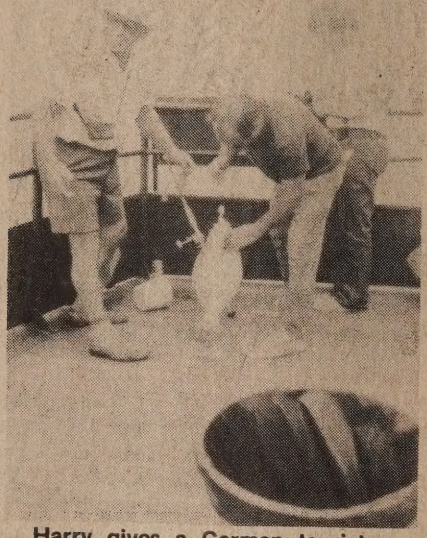
The trip just related proves that point much like the story of the little boy with the canoe pole and the bent pin outfishing the man who looks like a walking ad for an expensive tackle shop.

While we were paddling back to shore to photograph and release all those fish over the limit, we crossed paths with another fisherman, his foot on the control pedal of the electric motor, his eye on the electronic depth finder and his tail seated comfortably in a swivel chair. We had seen him trolling all over the lake while we were catching our stringers full. We greeted him with the usual "How 'ya doing?" to which he replied, "Lousy, just one little perch. You guys getting anything?" It was mean, it was rotten, but we could not resist. As if on cue, we both raised our overloaded stringers and watched the other man's face as we said, "Bass, Mister!"

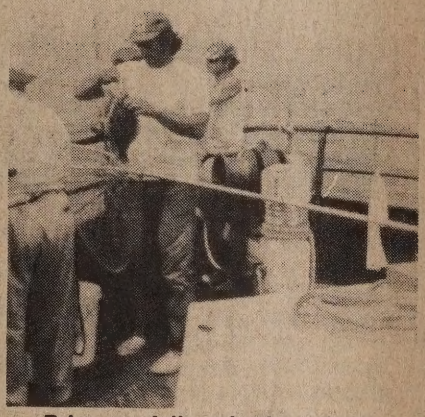


Big Boat Fluking

by Bruce Sucher



Harry gives a German tourist a hand with his first fluke.



Brian carefully unhooks a short.

Any boat I can feel safe on in moderate seas, out of sight of land, is for deep water fluke fishing. Eighteen feet and larger with a dependable engine is a must. People have crossed the Atlantic in row boats, and seven foot sailing vessels, but I am not of that breed. Enough time on the ocean produces a healthy respect and a feel for water that borders on paranoia. You do not generally fish out of sight of land for fluke, but when you slip into the trough of a six foot wave you are, and if you're more than ten minutes from bay calm water then you're in for a hairy wet ride. Plus a first hand lesson in seamanship. I'm not generally an overly cautious person. I'll stand on a slippery jetty with waves breaking over me and I'll jump out of airplanes, but I know what I'm getting into. I just don't want you to be in an uncomfortable position simply because you've listened to the advice of yours truly.

If you have a decent sized boat then most likely you are familiar with nautical charts and how to read them. They are an invaluable tool to finding where the fluke are. Look for channels, sand bars, any sudden change in depth and where the change occurs is good fluke drifting turf. Electronic depth finding gear is especially helpful here, and though your unit will not pick up the bottom hugging fish, it will pin point where they should be.

Another way to fish is to follow a pro. A party boat skipper generally knows where the fish are, he has to. Stay comfortably astern of him and try out his spots. Just don't crowd him and you won't make any enemies. Ship to shore radios and citizen band outfits are also useful tools. Listen and learn. When party boats do well they tell their friends about it.

Now what to do when you get there. I prefer a medium weight conventional rod and reel loaded with 20 or thirty pound test mono. You'll be fishing deeper water so your sinker will be on the heavy side, between 4 and 8 ounces. The 4/0 Sproat on a three foot leader of thirty pound test, tied four inches above the sinker has proven to be most effective.

You can choose from a vast assortment of bait. Killies are not one of them. To my knowledge these baits are found mostly in bays and shallow waters and

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are not natural to the deeper offshore spots. Instead stick with sand eels spearing, smelt or almost any small slivery fish hooked through the eyes. Strip baits are effective here, but they tend to be a bit larger. Make the strip from any light colored fish, the tougher the skin the better. Sand shark belly is particularly good because it resists the fluke's sharp teeth and a single strip can last quite a while. The strips should be about one inch wide and between four and six inches long. You can taper it to a point or leave the length constant. Just make sure you don't bunch it up on the hook. Put your rig into the water and move it from side to side. Does it seductively flutter after the sinker? Good, then lower it to the bottom and let out enough line so that you feel your sinker bouncing along. Your reel is on free spool, let out three-four feet of line and when the drift tightens your line lock your reel and strike with a steady lift. Don't jerk your rod upwards like you are trying to pull the cork out. Bring the fish slowly to the side of the boat and gently guide it to the mouth of the landing net. Didn't that feel good? Many times the fluke, when it sees the boat will make a last charge for the bottom and if your drag is locked tight you can say good-bye. Especially if it's that twelve pound door mat you've been waiting for all season.

If the tide and the wind have stopped, then put on a lighter sinker and jig your bait slowly. This will give your rig the motion that fluke are crazy about. Spinners: to be or not to be? I don't like them. Sitting in a tackle shop all glitter and shine they catch your eye. That in my opinion is what they are designed to do, not to catch fish. Some people swear by them, not me. My theory about how to catch fish is simple; use the lightest practical leader and least visible hook, present the bait as naturally as possible.

Where two opposing currents meet a rip is formed. This turbulent area holds its share of fluke. Fishing the rips for fluke became popular in the Montauk area. You don't have to travel that far to enjoy this type fishing. One spot that comes to mind is the rip that forms off the tip of the breezy point jetty. The water is rough there, and you've got to be careful, but the rewards are frequently worth the bumpy ride.

If someone were to ask me where I'd go to catch a large fluke I'd say a wreck or rough bottom. If you can find a wreck and can line your drift up so that you skirt the hulk, then you have a good chance of connecting. If you anchor on the site, then you can cast out and slowly bounce your rig along the bottom. Cast and retrieve and more than likely you'll be pleasantly surprised. But fishing these underwater junk piles or rock strewn bottoms means lost tackle. Take spares. If you like to use artificials, then this is the place. Bounce that bucktail adorned with a piece of pork rind or strip bait and that door might say hello.

Late August and the whole of September is the time for big fluke. The Jersey coast (sea bright is best) Ambrose and Gedney channel just to mention a few places, become more and more productive. The fish are migrating out of the bays and inlets and are fattened up for the journey. Just one more thing. If you can manage to get some small snappers, herring, or tinker mackerel, (about six inches long) then take them with you. Like the man said, "a big bait for a big fish." Good luck!

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BASS & BUNKERS

Part I

by Capt. Ron Onorato

The situation didn't look very encouraging. It was the middle of June, and George Oliver and myself had been fishing live bunkers off some Rockaway jetties for several hours without so much as a rise. "I can't understand it, we should have nailed at least one bass" commented George. All we had to show for our efforts thus far were a couple of tired bunkers.

"Maybe the Long Beach jetties have some fish" I added. With that George started the outboard up and we made a short run to Long Beach. We made our first pass in front of an old broken jetty that had produced fish in the past.

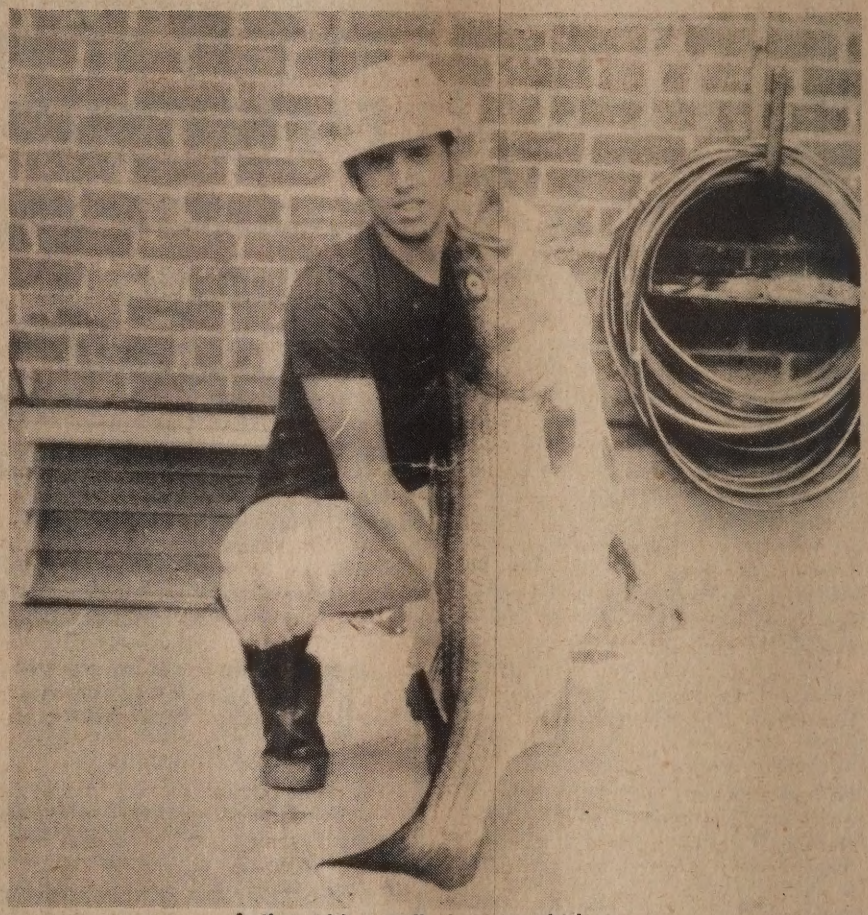
There was a slight Northerly breeze, so George edged the small outboard close to the tip of the jetty and cut the motors. The wind carried us slowly off the beach. We both put our bunkers in the water at the same time, but George had heaved his a little closer to the rocks than I did.

About 75 feet from the tip of the stones, George's bunker came flying to the top of the water, and made a beeline for the deeper water. "I have a customer" shouted George. Unfortunately the bass didn't take the bait. Some hundred yards from the beach we pulled in our baits and started in for another pass.

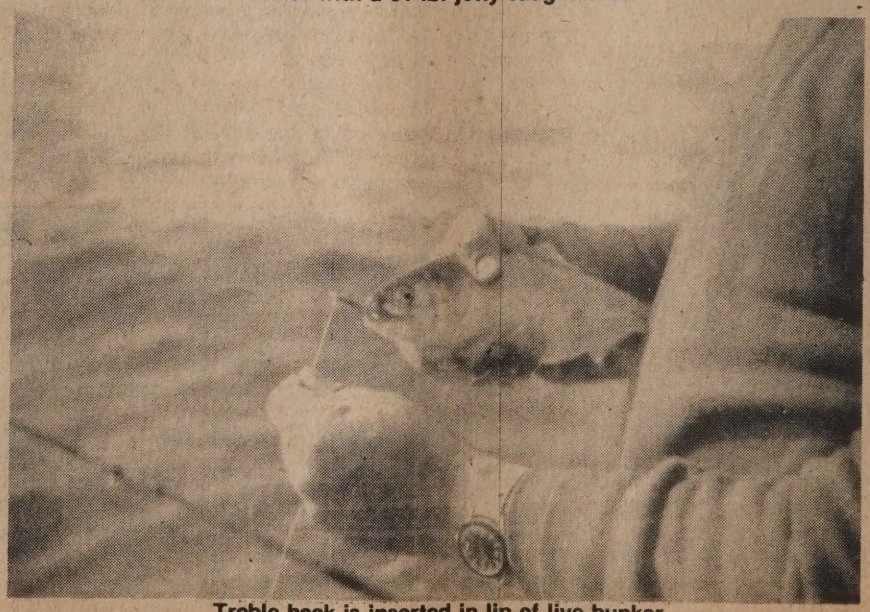
This time I had the edge on George, as I all but put my bait right on the rocks. My bunker hadn't swum 10 feet when I felt a pickup. I let the fish run a good while, and slammed the reel into gear. The fish felt the hook and made a sizzling run parallel to the beach. It was a nice fish, and luckily it didn't take off into the rocks where it may have cut my line.

After a brief tussle I had the fish alongside the boat where George gaffed him in the head. A fish of about 35 pounds was lifted aboard. "Look where you hooked him" said George. The 3/0 treble hook was lying just in the corner of his mouth. This is why the fish fought so well. "If I had hit that fish any quicker, she'd still be swimming around" I mentioned.

I cut off the hook and re-rigged while George took the boat in for another pass. I wasn't ready, so George had this one all by himself. A nice long drift didn't produce any life. We started up again and made another pass without any action. In all we made six more passes at that jetty without any other signs of bass life. "Let's run down the beach a bit and see what we can dig up" mentioned



Author with a 51 lb. jetty caught bass.



Treble hook is inserted in lip of live bunker.

George as he started up the outboard.

As the boat was underway, I dumped several pails of fresh seawater into the large plastic garbage can that we had used to keep the bunkers alive in. We had 4 lively pieces left with 2 somewhat injured specimens. I took them out and heaved them over the side. These 4 pieces were all the bait we had and since the bunker school from which we had snagged them disappeared a while ago, there was no other source of bait.

The run down to the beach was a short one. Again we had selected a jetty that had produced fish for us in the past. The wind had died down to virtually nothing and there was absolutely no wave action around the tip of the stones. I had already inserted my treble in the bunker's lip while we were underway, so as soon as the boat stopped, I had my bait in the water.

The bunker was swimming slowly on the bottom before it made a sharp rise to the surface. The boat had drifted a considerable distance from the jetty but the bunker was still swimming on the top. Almost out of nowhere a big bass took a swipe at my bait, sending the bunker completely out to the air. As soon as the bait came down, the bass took it, leaving a wash tub size swirl. The fish ran about ten feet, and then nothing. I reeled in an empty hook. The bass had shaken the bunker from the hook.

All we had left was 3 pieces of bait and I saw it coming, we had found some fish, but were low on bait. On the next pass, both baits went in again. Almost as soon as George's bunker started swimming, he had a pickup. He let the fish run a good ways and then he slammed it. From the way it was taking drag, it looked like a nice fish. I had left my bait over but put the clicker on the reel while I went to help gaff George's fish. No sooner had I put the rod in the holder, when there was a screaming runoff. I stumbled over the garbage can and grabbed the rod. I threw the clicker off and line still steamed off. Since the fish had taken a nice run with the clicker on, I hit the fish almost immediately. The boat was a good ways off from the stones, so there was little chance of losing the fish in the rocks.

We had two fish on at the same time and luckily we managed to land both of them. George's fish was a nice 30 pounder, while mine was a teen size "rat". That last piece of bait in the pail became the most sought after item on the boat. Unfortunately, it had died and we were out of business.

Since it was late in the day, we called it quits rather than search out another bunker school. We had 3 nice fish in the box and considered it a successful day as we geared up for the long ride home.

With the resurgence of the bunker schools off the coast of Long Island and New Jersey, loads of fishermen eager to get a chance at trophy bass have gotten into the sport of bunker dunking. As compared to other types of bass fishing, bunker fishing is relatively easy. Though with any type of bass fishing, it does have its fine points.

At first bunker fishing was a closely guarded secret. Somehow the word got out and vast numbers of fishermen got into the act. Some impressive scores of fish were racked up by not so experienced fishermen and a new phase of bass fishing evolved on Long Island.

The object of all this attention is the mossbunker, often called menhaden and pogy. Big bass and blues have a big desire for this oily bait fish. Indeed, I think that more bass are caught on this bait than all other types combined, when the bunkers are plentiful.

Sometimes acquiring enough bait for a days fishing is often more difficult than the bass fishing itself. Bunkers are a densely schooling fish and spend a great amount of time swimming on the surface. They are often detected by tell-tale slap they make with their tails when they swim right on top. If the school is extremely dense, they often cause a ripple on the surface of the water. This is especially true when some sort of predator is after them.

The bunkers usually show up off Long Island's south shore sometime in early May. These first arrivals are usually very scattered and easily spooked making it difficult to obtain bait. Around the end of the month, the schools are beefed up and getting a day's supply of bait becomes easier.

The most popular method of getting bait is snagging. Snagging is merely dragging some sort of treble hook through a school of bunker and foul hooking one. While there are snagging rigs that consist of several treble hooks, I have found that a single 6/0 treble hook attached directly to a 2 ounce drail is all that is needed.

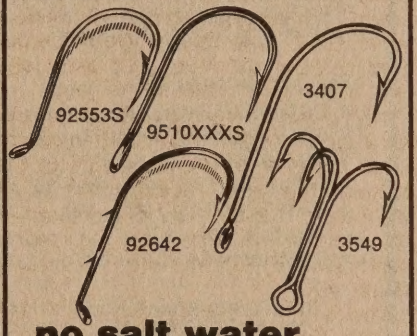
Once you have located a patch of bunkers, pull your boat uptide and upwind of the school. This allows the boat to drift directly towards the bait without any engine noise. Since the bunker you'll be snagging will weigh up to a pound in weight, the spinning rod that is used must be substantial.

Any sort of medium-heavy action spinning rod with a complementing reel of 20 pound mono is more than ample. As you approach the school of bunkers, try to cast over the school if possible. Sometimes casting directly into the school will spook them. Let the weighted treble sink a few seconds, and then begin a fast retrieve, whipping the rod tip along the way. You will usually end up with a bunker foul hooked somewhere along the back.

Keeping the bunkers alive are the next problem. Bunkers require a high oxygen

(Continued on page 54.)

MUSTAD SALT WATER HOOKS



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Bait, Trolling Flies: #92553S **Beak**—X long hollow pt., tapered up-eye, stainless steel, forged, reversed, X strong.

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MONTAUK REPORT

by Scott Simons

MONTAUK

The striped bass fishing has picked up considerably, but still remains a disappointment compared to years past, with the best action being at night trolling plugs or feathers. Seabass fishing is the best in anyone's memory, including the "old days." Offshore shark fishing is the finestkind around the Butterfish Hole and the first hook-and-line swordfish is expected to be taken any day now. Fluke fishing has been fair to good and hasn't peaked yet but should shortly. Scattered bluefish have been taken in the Pollack Rip, Great Eastern and the Submarine Buoy. Coxes Ledge codfishing also has been excellent.

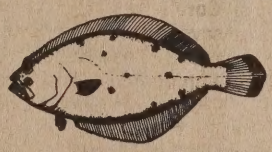
We heard over the radio that Capt. Paul Sundberg of the **Montauk** had a fantastic two day shark trip on Tuesday and Wednesday, boating twenty-five blue sharks. We also like to thank Paul for relaying our messages to the Coast Guard when the L.I.F. boat had battery problems on Wednesday.

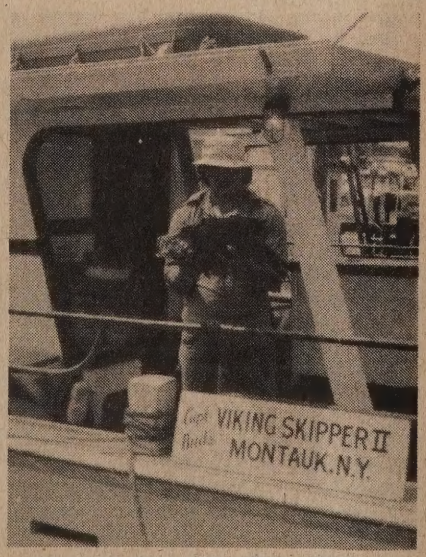
Capt. Frank Pike of the chartboat **Leatherneck** told us that there are now a few bluefish mixed in with the bass. Mornings have been best on the incoming tide trolling umbrella rigs in the Pollack Rip, the Elbow and Great Eastern. The bass are all good size, averaging 15 to 20 lbs.

Capt. Dick Vigilant of the **Triton II** has been doing better than most with the striped bass, averaging 20 to 25 bass per trip trolling umbrella rigs and diamond jigging. The evening trips around dusk seem to be the key to a good catch. Fishing in general has been looking up.

Donald Benedetto caught this 32 lb. bass aboard Capt. John De Maio's charter boat "Vivienne". Subscriber Club Photo.

Capt. Frank Braddick of the charterboat **Hurry Up** told us that the night fishing has been very hot trolling Stan Gibbs plugs, feathers and eelskins around Great Eastern. A dozen fish a tide are the average, ranging from 12 to 45 lbs. Both tides are producing fish. There is also a tremendous run of large, snowshoe category flounder at Culloden Point just outside the jetties. Anchoring and chumming is producing catches of up to fifty fish a boat of flounders averaging 2½ lbs. and ranging up to 3½ lbs. Frank told us that he still has a few dates open for night bass fishing in the fall, but the months of June and July are all booked up.





1st Mate aboard the Viking Skipper II caught this 5 lb. 1 oz. seabass on a wreck (Northside) along with many porgies.

The Sea Queen reports very good fluking with Dennis Gannon taking 23 fluke from 2 to 4 pounds with a six pounder grabbing the pool.

Ron Onorato is now chartering the **Hombre** sailing from **Gone Fishing Marina**, and should be furnishing good catches for his charters in days to come.

Capt. Howie Carroll of the **Jigger III** told us that the fluke fishing has been very good in the North Rips with quite a few nice sea bass mixed in the catch.

Capt. Lester Behan of the **Peconic Queen II** rated the codfishing at Coxes Ledge as "terrific" on both Saturday and Sunday. Ninety percent of the people on board had fish, with about fifty percent catching ten or more cod. Average fish is 15 to 18 pounds with quite a few in the thirties, which rarely is large enough to win a pool these days. On Sunday C. Payne took the $252 pool with a 52 lb. cod. Lester told us that he still has a few openings on the June 20th two day Nantucket Trip. The trip will be

a combination of wreck fishing for cod and tilefishing during the day and some night shark fishing. The trip is limited to 40 passengers, and every one is guaranteed a bunk and lounge seat. Give Les a call.

Captain Brad Glas of the **Helen II** had a charter on Sunday for a diving party that wanted to go to the wreck Montana an old coal schooner on the West Side of Block Island. On Saturday fluke fishing was good despite the wind and was good all week. Fish up to 12 pounds are being taken in the North Rips and Midway around the change of both tides. Brad told us that he has a few open dates this summer for groups that want to get in on the night fishing for monster Montauk blues.

Captain Paul Forsberg of the **Viking Star** said that the codfishing was excellent on Coxe's Ledge both Saturday and Sunday with anglers walking off the boat with bags of fish. On Saturday John Naslousky of Newark N.J. took the $170 pool with a 52 pound cod. Ed Navgin of Garwood N.J. took the pool on Sunday with a 49 pounder. Most of the cod are large, averaging in the high teens with many in the 30's and a few large pollack are mixed in. The cod action has been good all week on the southeast end of Cox Ledge.

"Greatest sea bass fishing I've ever seen, including the old days," according to Captain Dusty Doerzbacher of the **Little Bear**. Anglers are taking all the sea bass they want at the Frisbees and Rocky Hill.

Captain Bud Dorman of the **Viking Skipper II** said that there are still great sea bass fishing south of the lighthouse with catches of 30 to 60 fish or more per angler. On Sunday one 40 minute drift had singles, doubles and triple headers the entire length of the drift.

Captain Ron Grandinetti of the **Julie II** and 3 members of the Skunked Again Fishing Club took 2 striped bass up to 13½ pounds on diamong jigs and 185 pounds of sea bass plus 15 snowshoe flounder up to 3½ pounds off Culloden Point on Saturday.

Captain Rich Rade of the **Marlin III** told us that the fluke fishing has been very, very good, with average catches of 7 to 10 fish per man. Fishing has been concentrated in the North Rips and the pool fish is usually in the 8 pound category each day.

Super Star **Henry Colombi** of the **Star Island Yacht Club** called to give us the low down on what's happening at the marina. On Friday the charterboat **marie II** took 35 bass up to 15 pounds in 2 half day trips. Thursday nite the **Tom Cat** took 4 bass up to 23 pounds and on Friday nite took 6 bass up to 26 pounds trolling tubes off the lighthouse. On Saturday the **Bumble bee** boated 11 striped bass to 12 pounds trolling umbrella rigs at Great Eastern. On Sunday the **Friendship** fished the north rips and took 14 fluke up to 14 pounds. The **Say Fish** fished the Butterfish Hole on Saturday and managed 3 blue sharks.

SOUTH SHORE Fishing Report

SHINNECOCK

Altenkirch's Tackle reports a few blues and striped bass are being wire lined trolled outside of the inlet. Umbrella rigs and bucktails are the main lures on this wire. Blues run 8 to 9 pounds and by rights should run bigger but they are skinny and all head. The bass are five to six pounds mostly but some have run up to 25 pounds. Striped bass are also being taken drifting live or fresh bunker. Fluke are being caught inside the bay and in the canal using sand eels, spearing and squid. There are still quite a few throwbacks, but most fish are two pounds and up. There is still a little bit of weakfishing during the day at Peconic. Mostly it is bait of squid or worms. Mickey says the good offshore fishing for shark or big game is still to come as he feels the water is still too cold.

Angler Steve Zallogo has been using white bucktails on wire in Shinnecock Inlet to bag stripers on incoming of 30 pounds and 24 pounds on Tuesday. Steve says many other fish in the twenties are being taken the same way.

HAMPTON BAYS

Jimmy at **Corr's Mariners Cove Fishing Station** says fluke fishing was good over the weekend. They had fish over 20 inches long with an occasional 5 pounder coming in. Fishing off Corr's Dock with

The first trip of the season for the Montauk shark charter boat Modar I resulted in six sharks, the first ever caught by these anglers. Shown left to right with their toothy critters are Curt Martin, Bert Gluck, Bob Van Sise, Steve Piraino, John Rudyk and Jeff Moore. Capt. Pete Van Alst reported the action was fast and furious with several double hook-ups on Sunday.

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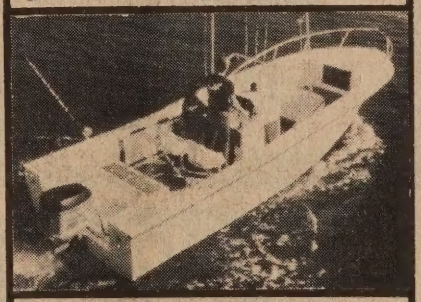

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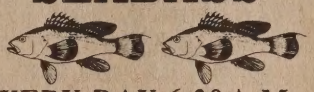
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Chuck Fabio, Phillip Muscarella, and James Mucarella with 30 fluke up to 3½ lbs. near bouys 39 and 39 on sand eels. Photo courtesy of Seatuck Cove Marina.

live killies and squid on a morning tide was best. Shinnecock Inlet also produced numerous fluke. Good catches of blacks on the afternoon tide on the rocks by the inlet using live green crabs. Using Rebels and bucktails on a falling tide in the inlet has brought in good catches of striped bass from 8 to 26 pounds. This action occured on last Tuesday.

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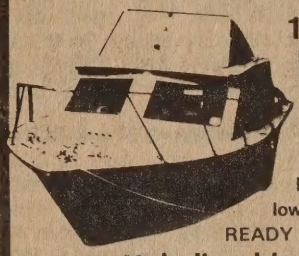

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MORICHES BAY

Cerullo Brothers Fishing Station reports most of the fluke action is at buoys 36 and 38 at the Coast Guard Station. Killie drifting is your best method and the average catch is 15 to 20 per boat of fluke which go from 15 to 20 inches. There is still decent catches of flounder being taken at buoys 29 and 32. Not many people are going but the average catch is about 50 or 60 a boat.

Al at **Hi-way Fishing Station** said he had one angler that fished east of buoy 39 using mussel chum and worms that brought in a bushel and a half of flounder. Fluke fishing in general has been very good with a lot of small fluke being caught and medium sized being fair. There are just a few big ones. A Mr. Laird while getting ready to bring in the anchor to go home, took one more shot at the fluke. He had a good heavy tug on his line and after a hardy fight, he brought to the boat a 31 pound striped bass.

Ben at **Tadsen's Fishing Station** says the fluke fishing during the week was so-so but the weekend developed very well. In front of the station from buoys 27 to 32 and not in the cuts are where most of the fluke are. The fluke seem to be moving deeper into the bays and are being taken mostly on squid with killies or spearing. Deeper in the bay the flke are smaller but keepers are better than ½. Flounder are holding their own at buoys 32 and southwest of 30 using bloodworms.

According to Andy at **Seatuck Cove Fishing Station** the fishing over the weekend for fluke was good. Fluke catches are increasing while flounder

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seems to be on its way out. But don't give up on flounder, says Andy. THere are still some northeast of buoy 42 for those who use bloodworms and mussel chum. About 20 per boat is a decent catch. Fluke are at buoys 35 to 39 using live killies as your best bet. Catches are about 15 to 20 per boat with as many thrown back. The largest was caught by the brothers Ken and Scott Haberman of Elmont Long Island. They caught this on an incoming tide between buoys 36 and 39.

Captain Tom Cashman of the charterboat **Rogue** won the Moriches Anglers Shark Tournament this past weekend with a 275 pound Mako which took 2 hours to land. This was in 140 feet of water. Tom also took a 200 lb. blue shark.

MASTIC BEACH

Stiriz's Fishing Station reports blues from buoy 15 to 17 on poppers and tubes, using poppers to skim the water. Richard Stern, Steve Mass and Steve Kellner did a job on these blues up to 7¾ pounds at buoy 17 which took fluke rigs before these three changed their rigging. These small blues are in on every incoming tide, says Gary. Blowfish are hitting dyed clam for good catches from buoys 17 to 19. Fluke from buoy 17 to 21 with more keepers this week, up to 4 pounds. Mike Proctor had a 4½ pound fluke and they are eating sand eels, spearing and squid. Weakfish are now on the smaller side with 3½ pounds the biggest for the week falling to Fred Wedley on a dark red surge tube fished on the bottom.

WEST SAYVILLE

South Bay Fishing Station reports good weakfishing drifting between buoys 5 and 19 with squid or clam and artificial shrimp. These are 4 to 5 pound fish, which have been taken along with some good sized bluefish. Fluking is good just south of buoy 19 and to the east of buoy 17 drifting with spearing, sand eels and killies. The biggest are in the 2½ pound range. Lots of blues in the buoy 19 area hitting everything and running up to 3 pounds. Blue claws at the town dock.

Again, Ariel Gutierrez and Elio Toledo did it again with a total of 86 weakfish! This should prove that the weaks are still out there. They were caught in Heckscher area drifting with Salty Dogs. Blues and fluke are also being caught on sand eels and squid.

OAKBEACH

The Store informs us that some bass are taking clam, eels and bunker, but no large catches are being made. Bunker should be snagged in the bay and then brought around to the inlet to live line for best results. There is steady flounder action at the Sore Thumb area and north of the Store. Weaks are sporadic at best on both sides. There is good action on small bluefish hitting bait, plugs, and tins at Democrat Point. Bob Contos on Friday fished 10 miles offshore bagging 25 blues up to 15 pounds along with a 100 pound blue shark. He also saw a lot of other shark, in 90 feet of water. 12 Year old Jim Mulnar bagged a 9 pound 15 ounce fluke on squid at the rock jetty in front of The Store. Five to seven pound blackfish are at the rock jetties, near the Store and are hitting clam, fiddlers and worm. Bill says to remind you that he has live eels.

EAST ISLIP

Don at **Wet-A-Line** reports blackfishing good at the Kismet Reef on fiddlers with weakfish sort of spotty. Fluking is fair on sand eels in the area of the Coast Guard Station.

OAKDALE

Howie's Fishing Station informs us that Bob Zapata had a good catch of weakfish and fluke at buoy 1, Ocean Beach with Red Salty Dogs tipped with squid, weakfish up to 7½ pounds. Fred Schwab had 14 weakfish up to 8 pounds on Salty Dogs and squid while Ron Kline had weakfish, fluke and blues on swimming plugs off the Heckscher flats.

BAY SHORE

Carl at **Smokey's Bait and Tackle** reports 7 blues taken by Carl Nickson off the Bayshore Dock. Fluking has tapered off, with the best being at buoy 2 and West Island on sand eels, squid, on the ebb. Bass are taking eels at the Sore Thumb. Weakfish early in the morning and late afternoon are falling to Salty Dogs and Pussy Cats. There are a fair amount of blues in the bay and they are being chummed in Steam Boat Channel when there is no boat traffic. Plenty of sea bass at the outside reef. Smokey's will be running their own fluke contest very shortly.

CAPTREE

Captain Neil of the **Lady Ann** says fluking remains a little slow but the sea bass action is good. Saturday saw sea bass on the reef, ten to fifteen sea bass per man, averaging ¾ to 3 pounds. Sunday's hi-hook was John Markus with 32 sea bass up to 3 pounds 4 ounces with a few porgies, blacks and ling mixed in.

The **Capt. Joseph Fleet** reported tough fluke fishing over the weekend because the wind was usually blowing against the tide, creating poor drifting conditions. Best areas have been off Ocean Beach, West Channel, and buoy 13 at the Robert Moses Bridge. Killies and squid combo's

are producing fish on both tides, and the pool fish is usually in the 3 to 5 lb. range.

Capt. George Tweedy of the **Captain Scotty** reported that the fluke fishing has been picky, off and on all week. A lot of small fish are around the inlet, with larger fish in the eastern part of the bay at West Channel, Steamboat Channel, Point of Woods and Snakehill Channel. Any tide with the wind blowing in the right direction has been producing fish. Weakfishing has been good in the evenings during the week with 60 to 70 weaks a trip with a few bluefish mixed in. The action was down on the weekend, however.

BABYLON

Bergen Point Fishing Station reports scattered weaks with an occasional blitz in the morning, with West Island a best bet. Fluke are around at the point and to the bridge, along with Dickersons Channel and the State Channel on sand eels and squid. Blues at the Thumb and they will hit a wide variety of items. Drifting the C.G. Station and the inlet is producing some fluke as well.

Charlie's Fishing Station reports good fluking the last three or four days, with 12 to 15 keepers per boat, best areas behind Grass Island, the State Channel up through Gilgo all on sand eels and squid. Also the bridge and the East West Channel areas are giving forth fish. Weakfish should be tried for in the East West Channel in the early a.m. hours before boat traffic with shrimp jigs and squid. Blueclaw crabs are starting. Please return the females which can be identified by orange eggs all over their bottoms.

Augie's Bait and Tackle reports the boat "Dancing Feather" bagged a 279 pound Mako shark on Sunday, with anglers Frank Shea and Henry Miller doing the honors. Charterboat **Shot Gun II** bagged 2 Mako sharks, 238 pounds and 156 pounds along with a 118 pound blue shark on Sunday, 160 feet of water, 150 degrees. On the previous week, Diane of the all girl Rod Holders of America fishing club took the clubs first shark of the year, 89 pounds and first blue of the year, 11 pounds 2 ounces. Any female wanting to join this club call Diane at 587-4405.

LINDENHURST

Charlie's Bait and Tackle reports fluking excellent in the State Channel, Great South Bay, Cowans, the Copiague Hole on sand eels, squid and killies. Striped bass are being taken in the State Channel and at the Coast Guard Station by clam chummers. Joe Giabonze had a 31 pounder and John says that a lot of 15 pound class fish and 30 pound class fish are being chummed, with a top of the flood and the first of the ebb working best, combined with early morning, evening and night hours. Bluefish are

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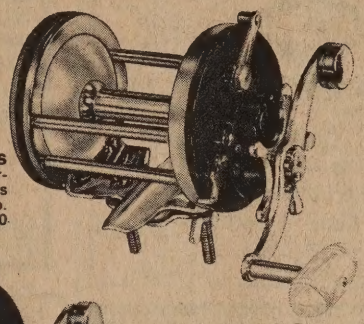

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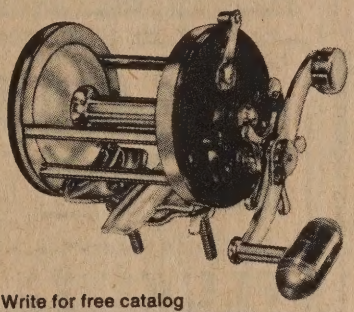

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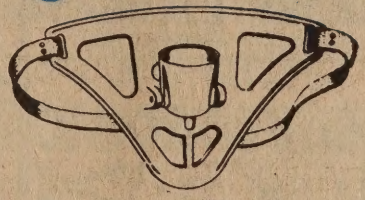

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LAST WEEK'S WINNER:
The person with license no. 724-XGG failed to call in by the Friday deadline, so this week once again there is no winner. Next week's winner will receive $40 instead of the usual $10 plus a fishing trip for two and a free NAFABCO Gimbal Rod Belt.

THIS WEEK'S WINNING LICENSE PLATE NUMBER IS:
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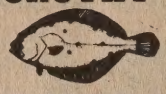
SHEEPSHEAD BAY

8 A M ★ DOROTHY B ★ 8 A M



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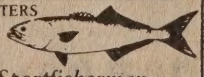

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scattered all over the bay and can be had on umbrellas, Rebels and chum. Flounder are still to be had at the Sore Thumb and north of Oakbeach by boaters and shore fishermen. Stripers are taking live eels off the Sore Thumb with nights and hi water working best. Blueclaws have started at the Wellwood Avenue Dock.

The **Lazy Day II** skipper Bob Fischer reports average catches of fluke on his charters are 6 per man with the pool fish usually in the 4 to 5 pound range. The inlet is good with a few sea bass mixed in, best being Ocean Beach.

Captain Jay Porter of the **Bullet** informs us that his Wednesday and Saturday Tile fishing trips were very productive. On Wednesday some anglers had 10 beautiful tilefish per man, fish twenty to thirty pounds. The pool fish on Wednesday was 37 pounds. On Sunday the **Bullet** went to the east end of Long Island in 170 feet of water for cod and caught several hundred tasty codfish. Nothing really large but several 30 to 40 pound fish were taken. Jay says that all trips, both tile and cod will be leaving at 12:30 A.M. instead of 2 A.M.as most men are arriving early anyway to get prime spots. In general, the fishing is dependent upon the weather, as usual, good weather leading to good catches.

AMITYVILLE

George Combs Bait and Tackle informs us that small blues are in the bay, 1 to 5 pounds with Fire Island Inlet producing larger blues, 8 pounds and up. George weighed in an 8, 10, 11.5 and 13¾ and 14¾ bluefish. Weakfishing is best at night at Ocean Beach with drifted sand worms. Blackfishing is good at the Wantagh Bridges and the reef on fiddlers and green crab. Small stripers are showing up inside the bay.

SEAFORD

Salice Boat Basin reports plenty of fluke with 50 percent keepers and the fish are a little thin hitting sand eels and squid at Squaw Island and between the Wantagh and Meadowbrook bridges. Some flounder around, at Four Corners and East of the third bridge. Small blues at the Short Beach area hitting baits and small plugs.

BELLMORE

Frank at **Merrick Marine Supplies** reports catches of stripers on clam chum east of the Amityville Cut, but no details yet.

1st big mako of the 1976 season caught by John Christie aboard the Chris T. The 282 lb. mako was weighed in at Augie's Bait and Tackle and is being mounted by Island Marine Taxidermy.

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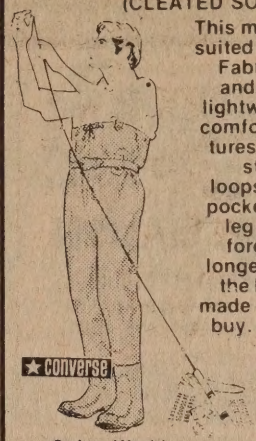

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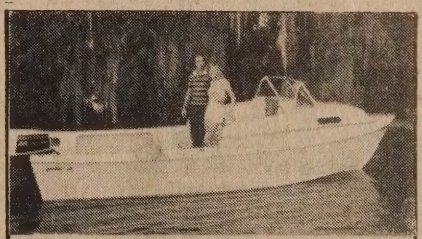

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It's our season in the sun...come join us!

WGLI 1290

MERRICK

Nick's Fishing Station reports good fluking at Merrick Point, Fundy Bay and Broad Creek, with lots of small fish amongst the keepers. Killies and spearing are working best. Sal had 16 keepers out of 97 fish, which seems to be a reasonable ratio for this past week. Some boats are anchoring and not chumming and still getting fish but are steady throwing back the midgets. Sharpies Baum and Diamond had 10 stripers on Saturday morning at Romer Shoals, 9 to 14 pounds on trolled white Lupo Almighty Squids. Blues south of Cholera and at Cholera on trolled red tubes. Jimmy says that a 54½ pound striper was taken by an as of yet unnamed surfcaster at the Rockaways this week on either a bunker or eel, but that he didn't know that Island Taxidermy of West Babylon will be doing the mount.

BALDWIN

The **Arthur Street Fishing Station** reports some blues are taking killies on fluke rigs and also hitting small Hopins cast to them, up to 8 pounds. Pete's Clam Bar on Long Beach Road is a land mark to try for these blues, due to the warm water coming from that areas LILCO Plant. Lots of short fluke along with keepers up to 5 pounds locally, at Point Lookout and Fundy Bay on killies and squid.

Bob Shafranek and Jim Cavannaugh caught these fluke on squid-sand eel combination and sea robin strips. The fish were caught off of Ocean Beach 6-5-76. Photo courtesy of Wet-A-Line Bait and Tackle.

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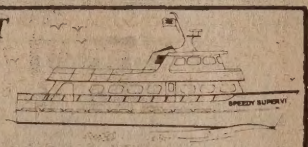

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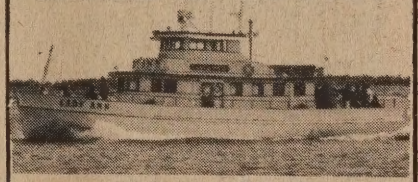

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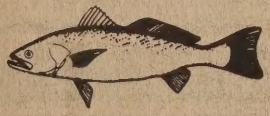

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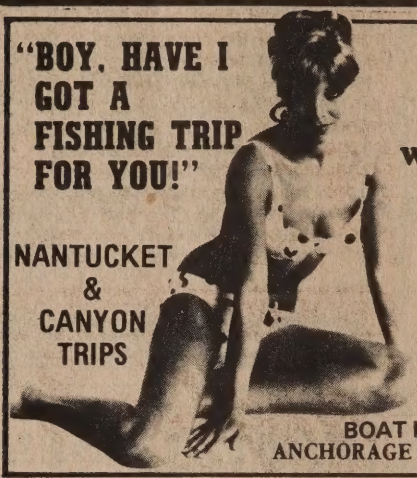
Tommy Covitz, Stanley Bigora and Carl Platti caught his 80 lb. blue shark along with 8, 12-15 lb. blues in 150 ft. of water south of Moriches Inlet Photo courtesy of Skidmore's Bait and Tackle.

LINDENHURST



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N.Y. BIGHT Fishing Report

FREEPORT

The Lucky Strike III reports that on Sunday the Club 93 of Flushing sailed. This family group was organized by Jim Loughran and they fished Swift Creek and the inlet area. Killies, squid and sand eel combinations took fluke up to 5¼ pounds. There were quite a few shorts.

The **Aloma II** reports that the fluke fishing on Saturday was fantastic off Riis Park. Anglers would catch 15 to 20 fluke and keep 10 or 12. These fish are going 2 to 4 pounds. Sunday poor winds made for a poor catch. Captain John Grimley of the **Aloma** said the sea bass catches are slowing down from the previous highs of 70 or 80. Saturday saw big crowds and catches ranged in the area of 25 or 30. A few fluke were caught along with an odd blue or two.

The **Captain Hall** reported that the fishing during the week was good for fluke off the beach. During the week catches of 8 to 18 were taken all on bait. A few odd blues also came aboard. On Sunday winds made for poor drifting in the ocean and all the action occured in the bay. There are loads of sand eels in the water.

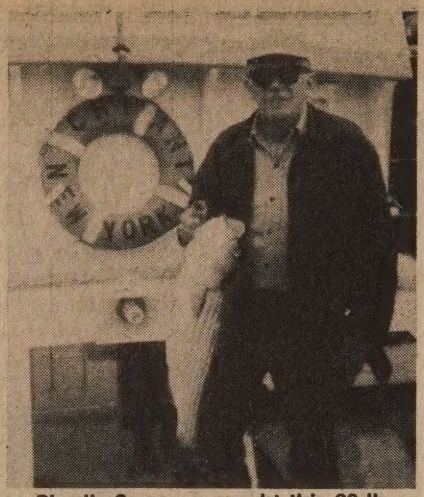
Captain Richie Kessinger of the **Starstream II** said that the report is the same as last week but better. Sea bass fishing remains the best in years and on Saturday a few porgies and an occasional fluke was taken. Sunday saw the same good fishing and one angler pulled in a 7 pound black.

Frank's Marine reports that his boats found a lot of fluke at buoy 14 in Long Creek on spearing, sand eels and squid. The keepers are a 50 percent ratio with about 1 dozen keepers per boat.

The **Captain Lou II** says that fluking was good 'till Sunday when the wind verses tide made the action quiet down considerably. Lou will be fishing in the ocean for bigger fish now. Up 'till now he was working the Coast Guard Station, the Inlet and Reynolds Channel with squid, killies and sand eels.

Mako Marina reports anglers Warren and Fred Maincella had a 205 pound and a 233 pound mako sharks which they brought in plus dozens of blue sharks which they tagged and released. This was 170 degrees, between 100 and 160 feet of water on bunker. The fluke is holding, with Ned's Creek producing.

Captain Marty Dombrowski, now running the restaurant end of the Poop Deck at the head of Woodcleft Canal reports that he is serving some of the best fishermen's breakfasts this side of Cape Hatteras to early morning fishermen. He says that one of his specialities is steak and eggs, toast and coffee. Give him a try.



Charlie Sweeney caught this 20 lb. bass on a dunked bunker at Sandy Hook. Subscriber Club Photo.

POINT LOOKOUT

Ed's Fishing Station reported that the fishins is not bad for most species. Striped bass are being taken on the West Jetty with fresh dead bunker. On Sunday Carl Smith of Oceanside took a 32 pound striped bass with this method using 12 pound test line. A lot of other bass have been picked up during the week on live bunker and eels and trolled tubes. Skin divers report many smaller bass on the bottom. Blues were taken offshore as well as several sharks. Hank Burnstein of Lido Beach fished 12 miles south of the Bell Buoy hooked a 5 foot dusky on Saturday. He also had a couple of blues and a football tuna. Fluke fishing is not bad, and there are a fair amount of throwbacks. The average of keepers is 10 to 12 per boat. Blacks are fairly good at the bridge still and are being taken on fiddlers. A good amount of sea bass are being taken on the wrecks and on Meadowbrook Bridge.

On Saturday, the **Marie III** had the Do Drop In Fishing Club of Glendale out. This small party was taken to the Jones Inlet where the **Marie III** was the first boat there and a nice amount of fluke was taken. When the boats started to gather, they went to an offshore wreck where they loaded up on sea bass.

Art White of the **Angler II** said that there are a lot of big blues being taken at the Cholera Banks and offshore. These fish are being taken on bunker and run to 14 pounds. Art says it is not a leap job, but steady fishing.

Jim's Tackle Haven called to report that on Friday John William took a 223 lb. Mako on board the skiff "No Problem." This was taken ten miles south of the H.A. buoy. They also took nine blue shark and two thirteen pound bluefish. The other anglers were Bob Linser and Bill Carter.

Scottie's Fishing Station reports that a lot of weed locally are mixed in with blues that are moving in and out of the inlet. Stripers are being taken in the Lido Beach area on boats drifting live bunker. There is a lot of small bunker in the bay. Lots of blacks at the Tea Wreck and Rotor Wreck and at the Meadowbrook Bridge on fiddlers and green crabs. The Meadowbrook and Long Creek bridges are also harboring blackfish populations. Fluke in Reynolds Channel along with many more in the inlet, but return the rats. The Coast Guard Station and

POINT LOOKOUT

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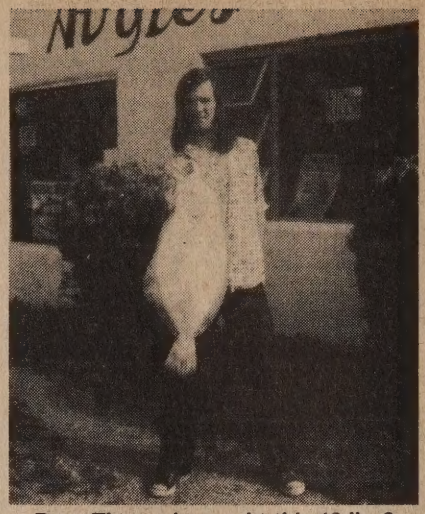
Haunts Creek are still yielding some flounder. The weakfishing has been put down by the maurading bluefish.

Moorings Anglers Harry Granoff, Mike Dinegriss and Capt. Herman Kornharens on the "Dolphin K" got a 278 lb. Mako fishing 190 degrees out of the inlet in 220 feet of water on mackerel and bunker chum, taking 1 hour and 10 minutes to land this beast.

In last week's issue we neglected to note that Island Taxidermy is doing the mount on Gary Benkert's 13 pound 8 ounce weakfish which is a pending tie for the IGFA 6 pound test world record held by Doc Grell.

ISLAND PARK

Beckman's Tackle in Lynbrook reports the Western part of Reynolds Channel from the Long Beach Bridge to Debs Inlet has a considerably amount of fluke being taken. This fluke fishing is especially good in the inlet area where the sizes go to five pounds. The usual combination baits of squid, sandeels or spearing are what is taking the fish. The jetties at the inlet and along Rockaway, especially the 156th one, has good amount of blacks. On Saturday in the morning, Frank Albert live lined a bunker off 156th street jetty and pulled



Dave Zimmerly caught this 10 lb. 9 oz. fluke by Democrat Point on a piece of squid aboard Pop's Dream out of Babylon. Photo courtesy of Augie's Bait and Tackle.

in a 47 pound bass. Striped bass action along this area is on live and fresh bait mostly. Along the beach blues and striped bass are being trolled on the usual rigs.

Bill of the **Ginnie Mae** said that flke fishing was very good along the Rockaways and Riis Park. Spearing and sand eels and other fish bait produced a decent catch of keepers but there are a lot of small fish. Sunday fluke fishing was down because of the winds but the trip was saved by fishing the wrecks for sea bass.

Captain Ronnie Lepper of the charterboat **Kim** (Atlantic Beach Charter and Guide Boat Fleet), reports excellent striped bass fishing all week long at Sandy Hook early in the week on bait, and the balance of the week and weekend it was trolled yellow or blue Danny plugs before dawn and trolled white Lupo Almighty Squid after daybreak. These fishs' bellies are full of shrimp. He has been averaging 8 to 15 stripers per day, from 12 to 25 pounds with a good sprinkling of 10 to 15 pound bluefish, though Ronnie says it is really Mob City at the Hook. He hears that chunk baits from local beaches are doing it in the wash in the Rockaways.

LONG BEACH

Tom at **Long Beach Sports Marina** reports the fluke fishing has recovered very well from the sludge spill. There are good amounts of keepers being taken at Duck Point on killies and sandworms. These go in size to 4 pounds. At the Atlantic Beach Bridge live lining bunker has brought in striped bass from schoolies to 30 pounds. The striped bass run is quite heavy at present. There are plenty of bunker to be had in Reynolds Channel for this live lining. A few weaks have been taken but no sign of a run for them as of yet.

JAMAICA BAY

Noehren's Fishing Tackle reports bluefishing on bunker chunks at the North Channel Bridge. There are plenty of bunker there to be snagged. There is also still flounder fishing there which is a surprise to all. A few fluke have been taken at Floyd Bennet Field.

John at the **Yellow Shed** reports blues of mostly 3 to 5 pounds with some going up to 15 being taken on fresh bunker chunks at the South Channel Bridge. John says that the fozen is okay, but it's soft and the eels take it. Recommended tides for this fishing is the last of the incoming and the first half of the

F. Osaki caught these weaks up to 8 lbs. on squid and sand eels. Photo courtesy of charlie's Fishing Station.

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outgoing. Fluke are in the bay and the keepers and the keepers are of better size than those in the ocean. Blacks and sea bass are also being taken at the South Channel Bridge. The sea bass are being taken on squid, killies or grass shrimp while the blacks are taking fiddlers, clams and shrimp. Striped bass are coming into the grass shrimp chum lines and John says they took 22 of these bass from 2½ to 5¼ pounds on Thursday night. They threw back as many if not more shorts.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

Tom at **Stella Maris** reports bunker dunking and trolling are taking striped bass. Plenty of fluke off of Riis Park and from the Rockaway Jetty to Fort Tilden and on out as far as the Ambrose Channel. There are fewer shorts and keepers run about 3 out of 4. Norton's Point has blues to 10 pounds and are being taken on bunker chunks or trolling. The striped bass are also in the same area from Norton's Point to the Verranzano Bridge using the same methods as for the blues. Bait and jigged lures have taken smaller blues at Manhattan Beach. The wrecks off Seabright and the Rockaways are still producing numerous sea bass and blacks. The Romer Shoal area is also producing a good amount of striped bass. Tom says there is plenty of bunker in the water.

Captain Tony of the **Big Mohawk II** said the fluke fishing was pretty good on Saturday. They had out the local 101 of the CWA Sportsmens Fishing Club and they had a lot of action. Keepers ran 3

Don of Wet-A-Line Bait and Tackle caught a 15 lb. striper and a 10 black at Moriches Inlet. The striper was taken on a Cotton Cordell "Big O" and the black was taken on a fiddler crab. Photo courtesy of Wet-A-Line Bait and Tackle.

Mate Stu Leeseman shown here holding the 4½ lb. pool winning fluke on a recent trip aboard the Lazy Day II.

out of 5. On Sunday, the poor winds and the heave did not allow the Five Corners Fishing Club to come up with good numbers of fish. The baits are spearing, some squid but the sandeels seem to produce best.

Captain Larry Krim of the **Eagle** reports the fluke fishing has picked up. On Sunday, they had several hundred fluke for 70 people. They fished along the Rockaways just short of the Ambrose Channel using sand eels, spearing and squid for bait. Saturday was comparable to Sunday in fishing.

The **Dorothy B** reports slow fishing for fluke along the Rockaways and along the Tin Can Grounds. Sunday saw a pickup so that the average catch was 10 per man. Mary Cawley of Brooklyn took the pool with a 4 pound fish. Friday was also good in the same area and the baits were the usual spearing and squid but sand eels are best fresh when available.

The **Helen H** reports blues were a little slow on a Totten Lump. The baits were bunker and smelts and either one would take fish. Average catches ranged from 1 to 5 fish which were 6 to 12 pounds. Hi-hook of the day was a catch of 12 blues.

The fishing along the sea wall from Coney Island Pier to the 69th St. Pier was great for fluke and blackfish according to **Salvo's Bait and Tackle**. Blacks are being taken on fiddlers and clams with their weights going from 1 to 4 pounds. A lot are being taken on the rocks and pilings but the hot spot is the Coney Island Pier. Fluke are spotty with about 1/3 keepers. This area also has numerous crabs. A blitz of monster blues and many striped bass has occured in the area from the Rockaway Jetties and around to the Verranzano Bridge. Trolling umbrella rigs and bunker spoons are two good methods but drifting fresh bunker or bucktailing are much more recommended. Joe himself took a 12 pound blue on Thursday night at the 69th St. Pier using a bunker chunk.

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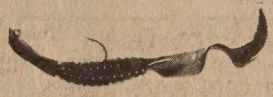

STATEN ISLAND

Lenny at **Santo's Sport Shop** says that the striped bass and bluefish action is hot and heavy for both the boat and surf fishermen. This action is from the Verranzano Bridge south towards Sandy Hook. At the Verranzano Bridge the boats are taking striped bass with the blues using live bunker for bait. Trolling bunker or drifting bucktails are also good producers. The surf at South Beach has been very good for the lure fisherman, but bait has been taking more blues than striped bass. Most of the shore line of Staten Island is showing this kind of hot and heavy action. Most methods for these two species of fish will work with good results. Fluke is very good but at present is not being fished for. Blacks are also good but seem to be on a decline at present. Great Kills Harbor is very good for blue claw crabs while the old piers and the Tottenville Barge are fair. There are plenty of bunker to be had and Lenny says most of the striped bass are in the 10 to 15 pound class.

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NORTH SHORE Fishing Report

ORIENT POINT

Orient By The Sea Marina reports big striped bass in the Plum Gut being taken on bucktails with pork rind. Small blues are there also on the same lures. The blues are 7 to 8 pounds.

GREENPORT

A.P. White's Bait Shop reports good fishing for fluke, sea bass and blacks at the Greenhills area on the east side of Gardiner's Island. Plum and Gull Islands and along the Long Island Sound Shore, from Greenport to Orient Point all have good quantities of blacks. Evening and early morning are striped bass times in the Plum Gut. Use a deep sinking bucktail with pork rind.

SOUTHOLD

Port of Egypt Fishing Station said that the weekend was slow due to the wind. Porgies are still at South Ferry and when the wind calms down the buoy 17 area is best. Weaks are still going good at the Brickyard and near buoy 11. Use squid or shrimp lures on these weaks. These lures and bait have also taken fluke to 4 pounds there.

NEW SUFFOLK

Capt. Marty's Fishing Station said the Rose Grove area has both porgies and weaks which are being taken on worms or squid. Porgies are also at buoy 25 but are being taken on worm only.

Ed Bracht caught these fluke averaging 2 lbs. off Lloyd Point. Photo courtesy of Four Winds Tackle.

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Ariel Gutierrez and H. Toledo of N.J. with 35 weaks up to 8 lbs. caught on green salty dogs. Photo courtesy of Young's Fishing Sta.

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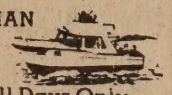

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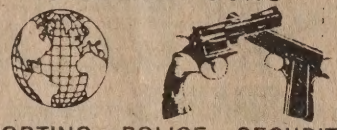

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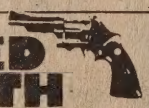

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JAMESPORT

Warren's Tackle Center in Aquebogue said that there were loads of porgies and weaks to be caught on the outside at the State Launching Ramp. Catches of up to 300 have been had but at least 30 or 40 can be taken by staying and fishing and not riding around in the bay when the fishing slacks. Blues of 2 to 5 pounds have been taken in various areas of the bay on cut bunker bait. Striped bass action in the L.I. sound is slow but good for blackfish.

ROCKY POINT

Stan at **Rocky Point Fishing Stop** said the blackfishing took a down turn while the porgy catches have increased. Most of this fishing is on clam bait. The striped bass action along the beach is now mostly at night using live eels or plugs. Fluke action has increased to such

an extent at buoy 11 that it pays to go fof them. A few fluke have been taken from the beach also.

MT. SINAI HARBOR

Dick's Sporting Goods reports the porgy fishing is much stronger now using worms, clam or squid. Blackfishing is down from its previous high. Fluke are extremely strong and catches of ½ dozen can be had using spearing, sand eels, squid or sea robin bellies. Each Beach action on the striped bass has slowed but small fish are taking lures or worm spinner combos in the harbor. There are schools of bunker coming in.

PORT JEFFERSON

Caraftis Fishing Station said the blackfish action out east has slowed and now seems to be concentrated around Oldfield Point. Fluke drifting along White and Oldfield Beaches is becomming more and more productive. There are some porgies off Miller Place and blues of 10 to 12 pounds have been taken there also. School striped bass are being trolled with worm spinner combo inthe harbor and along the beaches.

Captain Tony of the **Days Off II** said that the blacks have slowed but are still being taken. Mussel, clam and worms are the bait. Harry Steven took a 15 pound black on Thursday. Humpback porgies have been taken all week. Fluke were drifted on Wednesday near buoy 11 using spearing.

Captain John Fischer of the **Betty W** reports fishing is good and blacks over 10 pounds are still around. Fluke are moving in strong and six to eight per man has been an every day average. On Friday the Betty W had a pool fluke of 8½ pounds. The Betty W will now make fluke trips on the weekends at 4 P.M. Don't miss these fish...it's the best in years.

NORTHPORT

Tom Bowman of **Bowman's Sporting Goods** was excited about the first real catches of fluke in this area in years. These fish are being taken on sand eels with squid at Calahans and Makamah Beaches. There are lots of blackfish at Eatons Neck and Sand City. The area known as Valley Grove which is between Sand City and the Coast Guard entrance also contains numerous blacks. Striped bass fishing at Lloyd Neck, Marshall Field and Huntington Inlet are best done either by bunker dunking or worm trolling with a Cape Cod spinner.

HUNTINGTON

Ronnie's Bait and Tackle says that fluke fishing at Lloyd Point is best done drifting squid or sand eels. Some fluke are over 4½ pounds. Striped bass fishing is at up at Eatons Neck, Huntington Inlet, Target Rock and Cold Spring Harbor. Various methods of fishing for this species is with live eels, bunker dunking or worm trolling. All

Ron Levy took this 12 lb. spring striper on his own hand tied bucktail in Manhasset Bay. The bass was caught aboard the Ship Maits IV. Subscriber Club Photo.

methods are getting fish and all of different sizes. Ronnie's biggest fish that he weighed in was 32 pounds. Some jumbo blues were taken at Cooper's Bluff on live bunker. Blackfish are getting smaller and the porgy fishing has slowed quite a bit.

George at **Four Winds Fishing Tackle** says that the fluke fishing is becomming a red hot scene. Diamond Point at present seems to be the hot spot. Sand eels and squid with a spinner are your best bet. Joe and Marie Locurto took 25 fluke to 4 pounds at Diamond Point using this method. Drifting can be done either with the wind or the tide. Fluke have also been taken drifting at the entrance to the C.G. Station, off Sand City and at the Lloyd Harbor entrance. Capt. Dike Williams weighed in a 36 pound striped bass at Four Winds which he took on live bunker in Cold Spring Harbor. Captain Williams Wife "Chip" did him a little better by pulling in one bass of 36½ pounds. Most bottom fishing is down with the exception of the fluke which as mentioned before is terrific. A couple of blues to 12 pounds have been taken in Huntington Bay area while bunker dunking for striped bass.

GLEN COVE

Ron Leonardi on his private boat "Fish Hawk" had quite a good catch of weakfish from 4 to 7 pounds. He fished along the beaches from Mattinecock Point eastward. He used Salty Dogs with squid and took a half dozen weaks. He also had 1 blue of 11½ pounds on cut bait. Ron said there was a lot of CB radio talk of mackerel along the Mamaroneck side.

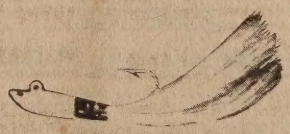
John at **Glen Cove Sports Shop** said small blues under 5 pounds have showed up. They are best taken at sunrise and sunset and are feeding on silver sides and sand eels. They range from Maxwell's breakwater around Mattinecock to Peacock Point. They respond well to poppers but you can also try shallow swimmers. For 3 mornings in a row, mixed groups of striped bass and weakfish have surfaced at Mattinecock and Peacock Points. The striped bass took top water plugs and were of all sizes up to 20 pounds. The weakfish also took plugs and were seven and eight pounds.

PORT WASHINGTON

Moreland's Bait and Tackle reports two to three pound bluefish have been taken at Roslyn and Barkers. These fish are chopping bunker in the early morning and evening. Striped bass are being taken at most points worm trolling. Rocky reports the north shore of the Sound has been loaded with mackerel from Larchmont eastward. There are still plenty of blacks in the rocky areas and if you want to get away from the Bergalls try fishing over the sand bars.

CITY ISLAND

Jack's Bait and Tackle reports lots of blackfish at Harts Island and Sands Point. These are being taken on both hard baits and clam. Big schools of mackerel have been moving between Mamaroneck, Rye and New Rochelle. At present there are very few porgies. Plugging with a green Rebel at Sand Point, Harts or High Islands have produced many school sized striped bass. Small bucktails and worms also work as well as the green Rebel.



Mark Fortgang, 13, with his catch aboard the Day Off II out of Port Jefferson. The blackfish on the the left weighed 12 lbs. and was the pool winner of the day. Subscriber Club Photo.

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FLUKE FISHING

(Continued from page 9 .)

diagrams B, C, and D.

SQUID STRIPS: A good starter bait for fluke when nothing else is available for bait. A good practice is to purchase a large "trolling" squid at the local bait and tackle shop and cut it into long, pennant shaped strips about three-quarters of an inch and tapering to a point. These strips are rigged on a tandem hook arrangement as shown in diagram E, with the top hook placed no more than a half-inch down from the wide end and the stinger hook imbedded no more than an inch-and-a-half from the point of the taper. The starter strips are used until a small fluke or other fish suitable for strip baits is caught. (See part three of this series next week.)

A popular method of using squid strips is in combination with a killy, spearing or sand eel as shown in diagram F. Known as a "combo bait" or "ham-and-eggs." Personally, I have found little or no advantage to using these combo baits, but I can't see that they do any harm.

Large squid heads are an excellent bait for fluke, particularly the large "doormat" variety. Use at least a 5/0 or larger gold beak hook and hook the head just above the eyes as shown in diagram G. The squid head is fished with a slight jigging action that cause the tentacles to undulate enticingly in the current. If that doesn't turn a fluke on, nothing will.

SNAPPERS, SMELT & SARDINES: Big baits for big fluke . . . remember that if you are looking for fish in the doormat class. In late August and September when the larger fish are moving through our inshore ocean waters on their offshore migration, the best bait you can use is a large baitfish. The biggest problem is usually obtaining a supply. The best bet is to catch a mess of snappers and keep them alive in a large bait car or a bait tank with man aerator. Rig the live snapper on the tandem hook fluke rig with the top hook lightly through the lips and the stinger hook lightly imbedded between the first and second dorsal fin as shown in diagram H. Live snappers are undoubtedly the best all 'round bait for taking doormat fluke. The largest fluke ever taken in Long Island waters was taken by Capt. Charles Nappi out of Montauk last fall on a live snapper, and the 22 pound 7 ounce fish is the current IGFA World Record for 50 lb. class line.

If you don't have the time to catch your own snappers for bait, two good substitutes are smelt and sardines. Frozen whole round smelt may be purchased in most frozen seafood departments in the local supermarkets and possibly in a few of the better stocked bait shops. Jumbo sardines can be purchased in the local fish store in either fresh or frozen forms. Other large baitfish that also may be used effectively are whiting and mackerel. All are rigged in the same manner as the snapper on the tandem hook rig.

Next week we'll discuss rigging whole squid and how to prepare and use strip baits for fluke fishing.

DIVING FOR BASS

(Continued from page 17.)

(ruins some meat), through the gill toward the mouth, downward through the backbone. Avoid gut and head shots at all costs—the stomach is too soft, the skull is too hard.

After hurting the bass, the problem is to get him to the surface. Run up on the line, grab the shaft by the rear, and try to jam the shaft completely through the fish, so as to string him into the line. If he is on the detachable head, and it has detached, try grabbing the bass by holding the detachable line close to the bass and grab his eyes with your thumb and middle finger. If you accomplish this, you completely immobilize the bass and ascending to the surface is an easy matter. If it is impossible to string or grab him, the only alternative left is to head for the surface, but by using the reel, you can gingerly haul him up so as to prevent the spear head from pulling out. On the surface, try to grab him by the eyes or even by the gills if necessary. The idea of having the fish in control is that when the boat approaches, all that is necessary for the boatman to do is to grab the bass, boat him, and use the "El Kolong" to stifle the fish's thrashing about. At this point, the diver decides whether he wants another gun or wants to board the boat for a "blow."

It goes without saying that your chances of a successful, safe dive trip are greatly increased if you can get to dive with one of the regular Montauk Spearfishing Association members.

Information as to dive conditions. sites, traps etc. can be had at the club's headquarters located at Gone Fishing Marina, East Lake Drive, Montauk.

SEA BASS

(Continued from page 7.)

mate has cut the bait into proper-sized pieces, therefore, you'll have no difficulty when baiting up. But if you are on your own, you may discover there is more to bait cutting than meets the eye.

Always cut skimmer lengthwise—never across, as so many do. By cutting across you will be discarding the best part of the bait—the soft belly, which the bass relish.

When offshore fishing, sea bass can be found without too much difficulty throughout the deep water of Long Island Sound, east to Montauk, and thence along the south shore of Long Island, to the New Jersey coast. Many fishermen on their own use a chart and check it over for local wrecks or rock-cluttered bottom.

In the New York Bight, such areas as the Cholera Banks, 17 Fathom Bank, the Subway Grounds south of Ambrose Tower and off shore Sea Bright, New Jersey have been producing sea bass for generations of fishermen. You'll find them listed on the appropriate chart.

When fishing inshore, look for sea bass around old, decayed piers, jettys, breakwaters, and deep water creeks and canals. When fishing these latter two species, fish close to the bank or bulkheadings. The fisherman is advised though, that for more certain, consistent fishing, angling should be done on the offshore grounds.

It's important that you find the deepest spots in any location you intend fishing. Few sea bass are caught in shallow water. And don't waste time fishing in any other than clear water. Sea bass will absolutely refuse to inhabit water that contains the slightest amount of pollution.

Sea bass are sure to put in an appearance this summer, perhaps in greater numbers than the past few years. If you've never caught sea bass, you owe it to yourself to try it. You're sure to go back for more.

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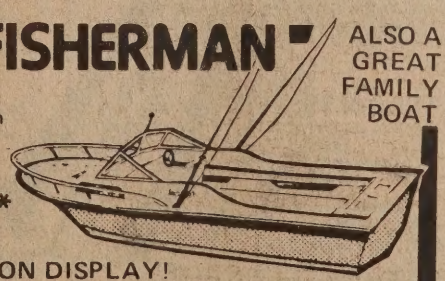

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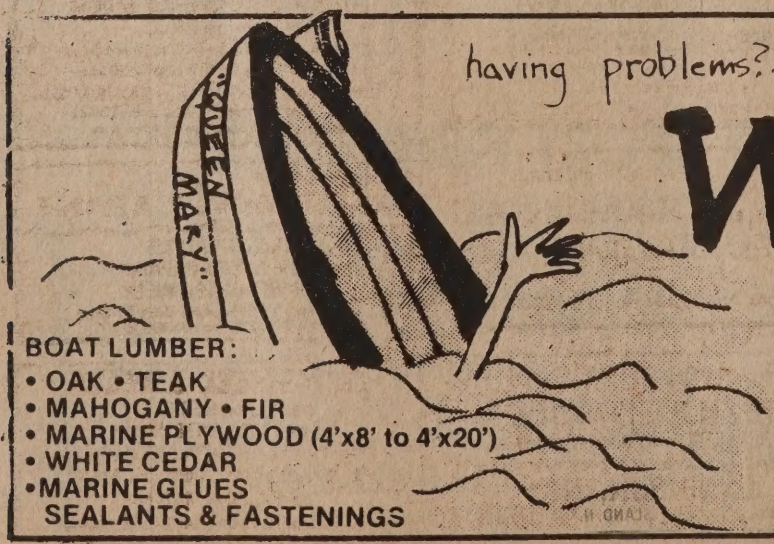
EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 4.)

sportsmen activities in the commercial arena. It should be high enough that only the man who needs to purchase such a license in order to bring home the bacon will be willing to do so. Although this may be an initial hardship for some, part of the cost can be made up through tax deductions and part will also be made up for by increased catches that will result when the sportsmen is off the commercial grounds.

Our New York marine district is too crowded to allow legal vacuums to drift about. Unregulated population crunches can only lead to more and more conflict, confusion, and disagreements. We think that it is time for meaningful fisheries licensing.

Sullivan G. Mueller



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John Dory Cricket, 25 h.p. Evinrude Electric Center Console, Casting Platform, Bowrail, Canvas Top, Front and side curtains, Trailer, Garage kept. Excellent. Extras. $1700. Call after 6 P.M. at (516) 698-4304.

MAKO, 19' 1975; 85 h.p. Johnson, 1975, Shoreline Galvanized Tilt Trailer and Extras. $5850. Call (516) 567-4237.

1974 Mako, 23' 188 I/O, C.B., Rod HOlders, Console Rod Rack, Head, Deck Cushions, Recirculation baitwell, Spray Hood, Drop Curtain, Covers, Hour Meter, Extra lights, Spot light, Danforth 12S with 300' line, custom glove box. Best offer over $8500. Call eves and weekends at (516) 868-8914.

1975 MAKO 23', 225 h.p. Chrysler I/B, Console Cover, Low Hours, Like New, Spray Hood. $8400. PORT OF EGYPT MARINE, (516) 765-2445.

1970 Critchfield, 20½ foot Cuddy Cabin, 1975 Johnson Outboard 115 h.p. Full Canvas, Very Good condition. Plus extras. $3450. Call (516) 541-3852.

1973 38' PACEMAKER S.F. All Fiberglass. Enclosed Bimini, 2 Stations, 6.5 Gen. Riggers, Gin Pole, Split Elect., Loran, VHF, Line Recorder, Scanner, C.B., Many custom extras. Asking $48,000. Located Eastern Long Island. Call (516) 543-2424.

1972 16' STARCRAFT CENTER CONSOLE, 40 h.p. Evinrude and Trailer. Battery and Box. Rod Racks, Storage, Bimini Top, Splash Pan, Lights, anchor, life preservers, just painted. Excellent Condition. Plus extras. Perfect bay and inland ocean fishing machine. $1500. Very economical. Call (212) 646-1558 or (212) BU2-8295 and ask for Tony.

1971 Sportcraft 30 foot fiberglass, Twin 225 Chryslers, Tuna Tower, Pulpit, Gin Pole, Outriggers, 140 gal. fuel capacity, Many extras. Fast offshore fishing boat. Call (516) 735-5204.

1962 PACEMAKER Sportfisherman, 30' F/W/C 1971 Palmer 225 h.p.. Fly Bridge, Bimini Top, Camper Back, Full Canvas, Exterior wooded down and refinished 1975, Cabin Top and windshield fiberglassed. Call for complete inventory. Very clean. (516) 751-0360.

1961 LUHRS 30' Sportfisherman, Day Cruiser, 140 h.p. Detroit Diesel, Fully Equiped for offshore fishing. Moderate investment. Low operatig expense relatively maintainance free, excellent condition. Used regularly. Asking $8500. Call (516) 587-7383.

29' Ulrichson Sports Fisherman, Flybridge, Legal Radio, gin pole, Fighting Chair, Depth Finder/ recorder, sleeps 4, head and galley. '72 F/W/C Palmer, 75 hours. Excellent. $6500. Eves at (516) 289-9041.

1970 REVELCRAFT 27' Fiberglass Sedan, 225 h.p. Chrysler (very low hours), Flying Bridge, 2 station Teleflex Steering, Sleeps 5, Galley, Dinette, Stand-up head, Pressure Water, Hot and cold shower, Carpeted interior, Curtains, fresh water system, compass, depthfinders, full rail, winter cover, dockside electric, all C.G. Equipment and lines. Loaded. Used little, Sickness. Yard maintained. In water, ready to go. $7000. Consider 19' or 20' center console outboard partial trade. At Frost Boatyard, 21 Shore Road, Babylon, or call home eves at (201) 225-0621.

$359 buys new 1976 13' Durka Nautic Coastal Aluminum Boat. Burck Inc., 526 City Island Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. (212) 885-1664.

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WHILE THEY LAST—Men's Waterproof Knee Boots $3.50—Children's Knee Boots $2.95, Sizes 12-6—Hip Boots $9.50—Chest Waders $10—Fiberglass Boat Resin $8.50 gal—Copper Bottom Paint $7.95 gal.—Fiberglass Material $2.95 Yd—Sale on Waterproof Canvas Tarps .18 sq. ft.—Waterproof Nylon Tarps .15 sq. ft—3/8" and 5/16" Dacron (strong as nylon) $7 per 100'—Boat Trailer $45—Boat Refrigerator—SPECIAL—Only 1 left $60—REDER'S OUTLET, 1728 Merrick Road, Merrick.

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TRAILER HITCHES the most complete Draw-tite line of Class I and II Hitches in stock on L.I. Sales, Installations, Service. TOM CASH WELDING, Lk. Ronkonkoma. (516) JU 8-6143.

2 used Sand Anchors, 30 lb. for $25 each; 1 used 75 lb. Sand Anchor for $50; New Block and Tackle, 2 Triple Blocks and 50' of ¾" Manila Rope for $60. Call (516) 379-2753.

MISCELLANEOUS

OBTAIN YOUR U.S. COAST GUARD LICENSE TO CARRY PASSENGERS FOR HIRE. Personalized Instructions, continuous classes. For information call Capt. Frank Bryant of the Moby-D Charterboat, Lindenhurst NY. (516) 893-1498.

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Young man looking for a job aboard a private boat weekdays or nights. Has mate from flounder to giant tuna. Call Paul after 6 P.M. at (516) 868-0507.

Rental—15' Bowrider, Trailer and 40 h.p. Motor, Or Travel Trailer Sleeping 5. Hitched to your car or mine. Bargain Weekly rates. Also Camping Equipment. Call after 3 p.m. at (516) IV 9-2369.

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FLOUNDER KILLER RIGS—Flounders are committing suicide on this widely used 3-hook rig, especially designed for the "Meat Fisherman". Special design and construction keeps tangling of hooks at a minimum. Hand Made. Finest materials. 3 completely tied rigs for $3 which includes FREE instructions for tying your own. Send check or money order to P. Miller, 150 Babylon Tpk. Merrick 11566.

NEW IMPROVED—Tandem Hook Fluke Rig/ Latest refinement of a "swinging hook" to this popular fluke killer rig allows you to adjust the tandem hooks to the length of your strip bait or sand eel. Keeps your bait perfectly straight and natural looking while it puts a hook where strip baits are normally bitten off by fluke. Send $3 for 3 prototype rigs and directions on how to tie your own to avoid paying this ridiculous price to: Scott Simons, 1428 Richland Blvd, Bay Shore, New York 11706.

FREE CATALOG—Expanded Do-It-Yourself mold section. Cast plastic or lead. 41 original soft plastic lures. 5 sizes. Shrimp: plus eels, worms, squid, etc. All supplies. Many specials. VIKING, 1306 North Road, Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909.

NOW AVAILABLE—The ultimate FLUKE KILLER RIG—Deadly, double hook design, long the secret weapon of the "pros". You'll hook more and lose fewer fish, since fluke can't avoid adjustable tail hook. Each rig hand tied, finest materials. 3 rigs for $3. Includes FREE instructions. Send check or money order to P. Miller. 150 Babylon Tpk. Merrick, NY 11566. Pays for itself in fluke dinners.

LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICES on hundreds of salt water lures, rods, reels, accessories and galvanized boat trailers. Send $.50 for catalog (refunded on first order) to: Salt Water Tackle Box, Dept LIF, Falmouth, Mass. 02541.

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FISHING RIG PACKAGE—5 flounder rigs, 5 blackfish rigs, 5 porgy rigs, 5 long leader fluke hooks, Send ten dollars in check or money order to F. Nicklas, 400 East 89th Street, New York, NY 10028.

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HAMPTON BAYS—Fishing Capitol of the World—2 Bedrooms, 1 bath, 80' secluded waterfront on Tiana Bay with dock for $43,500. Also 1 acre wooded building lots. Underground Power, City Water. $15,000. Terms Avail. PUSH CART REALTY, 151 Montauk Highway, Hampton Bays, Call (516) 728-1445.

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1974 International Scout—4-Wheel Drive, V-8, 2 Speed Transfer Case, Warn hub. A/C, 10 x 15 Rhinos, Many extras. Set up for beach. Excellent condition. Buying boat. $4800 or best offer. Call (516) 221-6371.

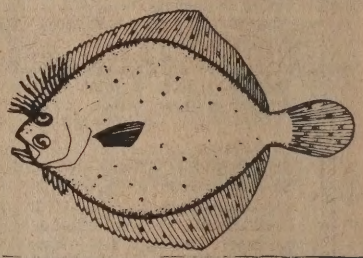
1965 Jeep Wagoneer, 6 cyl., Standard shift. Four wheel drive. Warner Hubs, 600D Tires, Roof Rack, New Paint, Many new parts, Runs and looks like new. Asking $1275. Call (516) 354-9299 8 to 5 P.M. and ask for Pete.

BASS & BUNKER

(Continued from page 23.)

content in their water supply. Too many bunkers in too small an area usually leads to many dying. There are many ways of keeping bunkers alive; this is pretty much determined by the size of your boat.

Some of the larger rigs have built in tanks with circulating sea water. These are the best for keeping the bait alive for long lengths of time. On the smaller rigs, you may have a bit of a problem. I use a 24 gallon plastic garbage pail for bait storage. I can keep eight healthy pieces of bait in the pail. The only thing is, a lot of water changing is necessary. On hot days, as many as 3 or 4 bunkers may die even with a lot of water changing.



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Your Host, Kent Hanson

HIGH TIDE TABLES

DAY	SANDY HOOK AM	SANDY HOOK PM	Breakwater Harbor AM	Breakwater Harbor PM	NEW YORK AM	NEW YORK PM	NEW LONDON AM	NEW LONDON PM	WILLETS POINT AM	WILLETS POINT PM	BRIDGE-PORT AM	BRIDGE-PORT PM	NEW-PORT AM	NEW-PORT PM	DATE
THUR	12:11	12:48	1:05	1:43	1:01	1:39	1:50	2:32	3:57	4:40	3:43	4:15	12:07	12:39	6/17
FRI	12:59	1:35	1:56	2:37	1:49	2:27	2:46	3:28	4:52	5:35	4:34	5:06	12:57	1:31	6/18
SAT	1:47	2:24	2:47	3:30	2:35	3:14	3:42	4:23	5:56	6:36	5:27	5:58	1:50	2:23	6/19
SUN	2:36	3:13	3:43	4:25	3:23	4:03	4:39	5:18	6:59	7:30	6:21	6:49	2:41	3:18	6/20
MON	3:29	4:05	4:35	5:14	4:15	4:55	5:35	6:05	7:59	8:22	7:10	7:40	3:37	4:09	6/21
TUE	4:27	4:58	5:29	6:02	5:12	5:46	6:27	6:50	8:54	9:11	8:12	8:31	4:30	4:59	6/22
WED	5:23	5:49	6:19	6:46	6:08	6:35	7:14	7:30	9:45	9:53	9:02	9:18	5:18	5:45	6/23
THUR	6:15	6:36	7:05	7:28	7:00	7:20	7:57	8:10	10:27	10:27	9:50	10:04	6:08	6:29	6/24

How To Use Tide Tables

To compute the high tide for the area you wish to fish, simply find the closest area on the conversion tables. Add or subtract the hours and minutes as indicated from that areas station above. Example: "Shinnecock Inlet.....—0 50" is listed under "On SANDY HOOK." —0 50 means you subtract 50 minutes from the times given for the SANDY HOOK STATION for the day you are going fishing. This is the approximate time for the high tide in the area. For low tide, add 6 ½ hours to this figure.

On SANDY HOOK

STATEN ISLAND	+ 0 27
ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS	— 0 01
Red Bank, Navesink R.I.	+ 0 48
Long Branch	— 0 34
SHARK RIVER INLET	— 0 18
Shark River Basin	+ 0 27
MANASQUAN INLET	— 0 12
Seaside Park	— 0 33
Mantoloking Bridge	+ 5 34
TOMS RIVER	+ 4 37
Waretown	+ 2 33
BARNEGAT LIGHT	— 0 20
Manahawkin Bridge	+ 2 33
Beach Haven	+ 1 47
LITTLE EGG INLET	— 0 01
Seven Islands	+ 0 12
Graveling Point	+ 1 05
Mullica River	+ 1 55
Grassy Bay	+ 1 08
ABSECON INLET	+ 0 14
Atlantic City Pier	— 0 26
Gt. Egg Harbor Inlet	+ 0 12
GREAT EGG HARBOR	+ 0 46
CORSON INLET	+ 0 09
TOWNESEND INLET	+ 0 06
HEREFORD INLET	+ 0 02
Grassy Sound Bridge	+ 0 45
Cape May Harbor	— 0 02
Rehoboth Beach	— 0 07
INDIAN RIVER INLET	+ 0 14
SHINNECOCK INLET	— 0 50
Shinnecock Bay	+ 1 25
East Quogue	+ 2 45
Shinnecock Canal	+ 1 18
Indian Reservation	+ 3 05
MORICHES INLET	— 0 56
Smith's Point	+ 3 28
Harts Cove	+ 1 30
Potunck Point	+ 3 35
Mastic Beach	+ 3 28
FIRE ISLAND INLET	— 0 38
Democrat Point	— 0 38
Coast Guard Station	— 0 19
Fire Island Light	+ 0 47
GREAT SOUTH BAY	
Sayville	+ 3 39
Heckscher State Pk.	+ 3 20
Bay Shore	+ 2 23
Babylon	+ 2 12
Amityville	+ 2 21
JONES INLET	— 0 19
Zachs Bay	+ 1 25
Seaford Harbor	+ 2 05
Freeport Creek	+ 0 34
E. ROCKAWAY INLET	— 0 06
Long Beach Bridge	+ 0 19
ROCKAWAY INLET	— 0 00
Beach Ch. Bridge	+ 0 38
JFK Airport	+ 0 26

On BRIDGEPORT

Lloyd Point	+ 0 08
Cold Spring Harbor	+ 0 08
Bayville Bridge	+ 0 13
Eatons Neck Point	+ 0 03
Northport Bay	+ 0 03
Norwalk Islands	+ 0 10
Smithtown Bay	— 0 03
Cranes Neck Point	+ 0 05
Port Jefferson Harbor	+ 0 03
New Haven Harbor	+ 0 08
Mount Sinai Harbor	— 0 08
Herod Point	— 0 07
Mattituck Inlet	+ 0 19
Horton Point	— 0 20
Truman Beach	— 0 42
Falkner Island	— 0 13
Sachem Head	— 0 10
Branford Harbor	— 0 07
New Haven Harbor	— 0 08
Milford Harbor	— 0 07
Stratford	+ 0 27
Shelton	+ 1 36
Black Rock Harbor	— 0 03
Saugatuck River	— 0 01
South Norwalk	+ 0 10
Greens Ledge	— 0 01
Stamford	+ 0 04
Cps Cob Harbor	+ 0 06
Greenwich	+ 0 02

On NEW LONDON

Orient Point	+ 0 27
Little Gull Is. (Race)	+ 0 12
Greenport	+ 1 04
Southold	+ 1 43
New Suffolk	+ 2 26
South Jamesport	+ 2 32
Shinnecock Canal	+ 2 33
Noyack Bay	+ 2 05
Sag Harbor	+ 0 59
Gardiners Bay	+ 0 21
Promised Land	— 0 14
Montauk Inlet	— 0 25
Montauk Point	— 1 13
Niantic	+ 1 20
Stonington	— 0 33
Noank, Mystic River	— 0 23
THAMES RIVER	
Smith Cove	— 0 01
Norwich	+ 0 09
CONNECTICUT RIVER	
Saybrook jetty	+ 1 10
Lyme	+ 1 24
Essex	+ 1 38
East Haddam	+ 2 41
Higganum Creek	+ 2 54

On WILLETS PT.

Little Neck Bay	— 0 10
Execution Light	— 0 06
Manhasset Bay	— 0 01
Hempstead Harbor	— 0 11
City Island	— 0 03
Rye Beach	— 0 28
Port Chester	— 0 09
Mamaroneck	— 0 08
New Rochelle	— 0 24
Davids Island	— 0 02

On B'WATER HB.

CAPE MAY POINT	— 0 10
Miami Beach	+ 1 17
East Point	+ 0 53
Egg Island Point	+ 0 33
Cape Henlopen	— 0 05
ROOSEVELT INLET	+ 0 09
Mispillion River Ent.	+ 0 33
St. Jones River Ent.	+ 0 57

On NEW YORK

Jersey City	+ 0 07
Geo. Washington Br.	+ 0 46
Spuyten Duyvil	+ 0 58
Ossining	+ 1 53
Peekskill	+ 2 24
West Point	+ 3 16
Newburg	+ 3 42

On NEWPORT

Sakonnet	— 0 10
Tiverton	+ 0 21
Beavertail Point	— 0 02
Prudence Is., Sandy Pt.	+ 0 10
Bristol	+ 0 10
Warren	+ 0 21
Nayatt Point	+ 0 12
Pawtucket	+ 0 21
East Greenwich	+ 0 16
Wickford	+ 0 12
Narragansett Pier	— 0 08
Point Judith Harbor	— 0 07
BLOCK ISLAND	
Great Salt Pond	+ 0 05
Old Harbor	— 0 14
Watch Hill Point	+ 0 44

SUNRISE/SUNSET

6/4	5:25	8:32
6/9	5:24	8:35
6/14	5:23	8:37
6/19	5:24	8:39
6/24	5:25	8:40

PHASES OF THE MOON

NEW	1st Qtr.	FULL	2nd Qtr.
6/27	6/5	6/12	6/19

The Original Knight
SOLUNAR TABLES
When To Fish Or Hunt

The schedule of solunar periods for the following week as printed below has been taken from the original Knight Solunar Tables. Plan your day so that you will be fishing good areas during these times when the fish should be most active. The tables are not a guarantee you will catch fish, however.

The major periods begin at the time shown and last for an hour-and-a-half or two hours thereafter, and are in the bold type face. The minor periods are shorter in duration and lighter type.

	AM Minor	AM Major	PM Minor	PM Major
THURS.	9:55	**4:10**	10:20	**4:30**
FRI.	10:45	**4:55**	11:05	**5:20**
SAT.	11:35	**5:45**	11:55	**6:05**
SUN.	—	**6:20**	12:20	**6:45**
MON.	12:30	**7:00**	12:55	**7:20**
TUES.	1:10	**7:45**	1:35	**8:05**
WED.	1:50	**8:20**	2:15	**8:45**
THURS.	2:30	**9:05**	3:00	**9:30**

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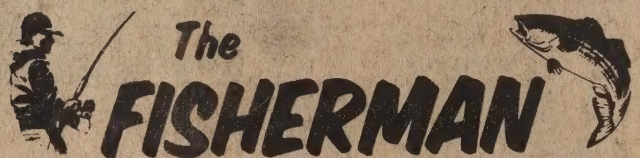

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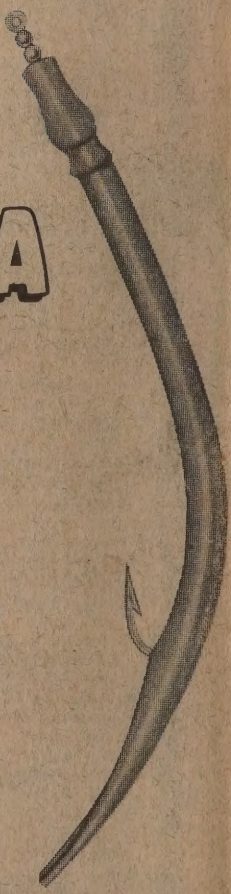

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